# American Scholar,

A QUARTERLY FOR THE INDEPENDENT THINKER

Winter • 1953-54

Some Observations on Intellectual Freedom

David Riesman

Education for Privacy

Marten ten Hoor

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VOLUME 23

Winter, 1953-54

NUMBER 1

### Some Observations on Intellectual Freedom

#### DAVID RIESMAN

At the Spring meeting of the Editorial Board of The American Scholar, in April, 1953, there was an extended discussion of an article entitled "Loyalty and Freedom," by Archibald MacLeish. A majority of the Board members voted for the publication of this article, and it was, consequently, published in the Autumn, 1953, number.

At the same time, several of the members of the Board were opposed to its publication, despite their very high regard for its author, Mr. MacLeish. One member of the Board, David Riesman, presented effectively his argument for this position, and, accordingly, was invited by the other members of the Board to set forth his point of view in the Winter number.

Despite Mr. Riesman's reluctance, largely, as he later put it, from a disinclination "to attack so brilliant and courageous and useful a citizen as Archibald MacLeish," he consented to write the following article. In accordance with The American Scholar's practice, we present a brief reply to this by Mr. MacLeish.

THE EDITOR

And if the ice was really to be broken, laughter and jest must be introduced into the consideration of the matter. In politics or business it would be obvious enough that one could not achieve a realistic view of what was happening if one was debarred from discussing principles or acts save in terms of respectful solemnity. Fun and ridicule must be allowed to play their part in the analysis of the motives or characters or doings of the principal actors; otherwise political discussion would remain at an unrealistic level, and those who discussed them would have a sense of servitude.

R. F. Harrod, The Life of John Maynard Keynes

VAGUE AND HORTATORY ARTICLES and speeches about the crisis of our age are a sign of the "respectful solemnity" we ethno-

© DAVID RIESMAN is professor of the social sciences and a member of the Committee on Human Development at the University of Chicago. Author of *The Lonely Crowd*, a study of the American character, and *Faces in the Crowd*, he has just published *Thorstein Veblen: A Critical Interpretation*. This article formed the basis of an address presented at Mills College in October of this year.

centrically reserve for our problems. I myself have sinned by entitling a monograph Civil Liberties in a Period of Transition, falling too uncritically in with the comfortably disquieting supposition that the time in which I happen to be alive is by definition such a period! Such rhetorical grandiosity may illustrate Tocqueville's observation that as a result of living in a democracy, the American's "ideas are all either extremely minute and clear, or extremely general and vague; what lies between is an open void."

This article is an effort to enter, in a somewhat dialectical fashion, into the open void, and to do so without the sense of servitude that characterizes much contemporary talk and writing about the fate of the intellectuals. I shall discuss some new-found conformities that seem to be emerging among many people who claim, often with good right, the mantle of liberalism; I am also curious about general tendencies influencing the position and self-confidence of intellectuals. Archibald MacLeish's article on "Loyalty and Freedom" is therefore (in the circumstances detailed in Mr. Haydn's editorial note) only the occasion compelling me to set down observations long accumulating. If, in what follows, I sometimes refer to his piece, I do so because it provides a ready illustration; many others could be found. I want to make it clear that I respect Mr. MacLeish's integrity and generosity; his motives recall Yeats's lines: "All things can tempt me from this craft of verse. . . . The seeming needs of my fool-driven land. . . . " If, to a person of my trade and training, certain poets and other artists appear at times politically naive when they make proclamations (while I must appear naive in another sense to them), this naïveté doesn't bother me and doesn't require an "answer"; I will fight with any censor for the right of such people to go on being naive and "irresponsible." At best, my article is intended not to engender a debate, but to qualify a tone and thereby the better to represent the pluralism which is one of the glories of liberalism.

I

Intellectuals try to cope with anxiety by telling each other atrocity stories about America. When this is done in science fiction, as in the Galaxy serial "Gravy Planet" (recently republished in a pocket book as The Space Merchants), it can be witty and even revealing.

#### SOME OBSERVATIONS ON INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

But when it is done with seriousness and portentousness, the consequences are quite frequently anti-intellectual, stultifying thought in the listener, who, bemused at once by guilt and by self-righteousness, murmurs "Amen, how true."

Other than as the expression of a current mood of a priori despair, the tales about America currently in circulation are often not entirely true. When, for instance, America's justly criticizable follies and excesses are compared with the systematic and calculated terror of the Soviet Union and the Nazis, the double standard applied misleads us in our estimation of events on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Totalitarianism, though it draws on attitudes and on techniques of organization available in the Western and perhaps the whole world, becomes in its totality something new as soon as it seizes power; as Hannah Arendt has observed, we quite fail to understand totalitarianism when we simply extrapolate from (or back to) societies where the party system and its ideological competition still function, however badly. In my opinion, totalitarian societies, once in power, dispense to a large extent with group or national loyalty (which involves danger of overadherence to principle), much as they dispense with ideological propaganda for internal consumption (replacing it with instructions in what the "line" now is, and who has hold of it). If many writers appear to overestimate the loyalty engendered under totalitarianism, they also fail to count their blessings when they attack the apathy—that is, the lack of loyalty to ideals—of many Americans. For this very apathy has its positive side as a safeguard against the overpoliticization of the country: the apathetic ones, often not so much fearful or faithless as bored, may be as immunized against political appeals, good or bad, as against much commercial advertising. Although, of course, there is much pressure for an undiscriminating chauvinistic loyalty and belongingness to a wide variety of groups, including the nation, I am impressed by the fact that among GI's there is far less nationalism than in the first World War-indeed, the pressure for loyalty may be, among many other things, one form, often unconscious, of the battle between older and younger generations.

Moreover, the conflict between loyalty and freedom may be quite absent from the minds of many politically apathetic people

who appear to be "followers" of Senator McCarthy. They see him in terms of the drama of his career: has he found a gimmick that will get him ahead? The meaning they see in him resembles what they find in figures of the entertainment world or the underworld who have risen to the top without gentility, without connections, and apparently without education. Some of those who have this dramatic view of what on the surface operates as an "anti-Communist crusade" are quite prepared to continue to befriend neighbors who, as ex-Communists, have been called before Congressional committees, because for them the salient issue is not one of loyalty, or of politics at all. They may even be a bit proud to know somebody who got into the papers. I don't know how widespread this apolitical reaction is, but I do know that it is terribly difficult to interpret what Mr. MacLeish refers to as "our silence as a people." European intellectuals can make very little of it either, perhaps because American cynicism and European cynicism exist in very different contexts. When we try to deal with so big and stratified a country as ours-so big that it often cannot hear the talk of the articulate—we ought not to begin by reading into others our own fears and idealisms.

Something of a double standard is also employed in many conventional comparisons of the American present with the American past. If, despite the Know-Nothings, a rough toleration has at times been maintained within our country (whose Northerners sometimes forget the Civil War), fears and hatreds have found outlets against Indians, Mexicans, Spaniards, and Japanese (wars often fought or prolonged for social-psychological reasons after the enemy had virtually capitulated). Moreover, to exalt the Founding Fathers as having faith in man, as Mr. MacLeish does, would certainly come as a surprise to crusty John Adams and to Madison; Jefferson might be willing, periodically, to accept the accolade. The Constitution exists, and is the magnificent job it is, in large part because the Fathers had so very limited a faith in man that they sought to protect us from our own and each other's weaknesses wherever possible. The more we know about American eighteenthcentury thought, the more complex it appears: strands of religious pessimism persisted from the Great Awakening; the Enlightenment itself was no single-voiced adventure in optimism (recall

Ĩ

Diderot's Rameau's Nephew); much talk of Reason took account not of all men but only of the educated; and so on. I am inclined to think we have, with a few exceptions, much more faith in man than the Fathers had, and I think this is in some respects a sign of our progress.

Very likely, however, we do not have as much faith as our parents did: we know a bit more, we have seen a lot more, and our aspirations are hardly less. The New Deal and World War II gave many intellectuals and academic people a pleasant feeling of being close to the seats of power, of being in on big doings. To some extent this feeling was delusive—an aspect of the amiable come-on Franklin Roosevelt practiced with many different groups, from Groton graduates to Hollywood stars. Correspondingly, for all too many intellectuals it drew a connection between being influential and having self-confidence, a connection which any even temporary fall in the "market" might sever; in the process, enjoyment of study and intellectual functioning for their own sakes became too much devalued. The postwar inflation which has raised the level of living for organized workers, many small businessmen, and other groups has relatively squeezed our financial security at the same time that the intellectuals, still prominent but no longer so politically protected, have faced a new (but, I hope, presently receding) wave of loyalty oaths, investigations and other marks of special suspicion and special attention.

Even so, I am inclined to think that many intellectuals today, so far as I can judge their views, overestimate the monolithic power of reaction. Peter Viereck once remarked that anti-Catholicism is the anti-Semitism of the intellectuals. Certainly in many strata people like to exaggerate the Church's power, as in less educated circles they enjoy exaggerating the power of the Jews; very seldom can one hear or read much discussion about the cleavages within American Catholicism or read analyses of the great reservoirs of decency there—analyses which show understanding of the role of the Orders, of missionary parishes, et cetera.

Likewise, gloomy talk about the "Fascist menace" in America overlooks the fact that all efforts of Fascist groups to join forces have in the past come to nought because the very suspiciousness and paranoia which are the Fascist leader's stock in trade make it

well-nigh impossible for him to co-operate with other salesmen on his side of the street—splinter movements seem endemic to "true believers." Moreover, our ethnic diversity, our regional and religious pluralism, our vested corruptions all tend to confine a fanatical leader to "his" people and section. While only the smug would assert, "It can't happen here," it does seem reasonable to assert that it is unlikely, and that the Nazi parallels that undoubtedly exist can be overdrawn. We are neither a small nor a defeated country.

The naming of evils, intended as a magical warding-off, can have the opposite effect. It is easy to imagine a group of academic people or civil servants sitting about in the hot summer of 1953 and swapping stories about who got fired from the Voice of America because he subscribed to *The Nation*, and how so-and-so was not rehired at Benton College because his wife had once joined the League of Women Shoppers—each capping the other's whopper of the reactionary menace. What is the consequence? A stiffening of spines? A clearing of the mind and will for action? I doubt it. If I may quote from an earlier article of mine—

I often suspect that the people who tell such stories are, unconsciously, seeking to create a climate which will justify in their own minds the concessions they are making—or, sometimes, a climate which, being worse in those they have spoken to and convinced, is better "inside" than "out." That is, the person who tells such stories (and, as I've indicated, it doesn't matter that they are true stories, one must distinguish between the weight and purpose of different truths) can feel he is bowing to strong pressures when he himself for instance drops a friend who might be suspected of an undue interest in racial equality....<sup>1</sup>

In short, intellectuals who, for whatever reason, choose to regard themselves as being victimized contribute to the very pressures they deplore. These pressures are not so strong as alleged; thinking them strong helps make them become so.

TT

In a way, the attention that intellectuals are getting these days, although much of it is venomous and indecent, testifies to the great improvement in our status over that of an earlier day. What

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Some Observations on the Limits of Totalitarian Power," Antioch Review, XII (1952), 156.

#### SOME OBSERVATIONS ON INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

might not Henry Adams have given for such signs of recognition! In his day the intellectual was no threat to anybody: whether clergyman or scholar, he had to defer to the "practical" men, the men of business and affairs. It is almost inconceivable today that a father should say, "Where Vanderbilt sits, there is the head of the table. I teach my son to be rich." In the much more fluid and amorphous America of our time, the writer, the artist, the scientist have become figures of glamour, if not of power. It is harder to say where the head of the table is. The practical, non-intellectual man feels uneasy with these changes; he resents the fact that his own importance as well as his own understanding of the world are threatened by the intellectual and the intellectual's ability to change ideas. There is a tendency for the older "class struggles," rooted in clear hierarchical antagonisms, to be replaced by a new sort of warfare: the groups who, by reason of rural or small-town location, ethnicity, or other parochialism, feel threatened by the better educated upper-middle-class people (though often less wealthy and politically powerful) who follow or create the modern movements in science, art, literature, and opinion generally.2 In other words, anti-intellectualism has increased in this country in proportion to (although not only because of) the growth of intellectualism. City slickers are no longer only bankers, lawyers and drummers: they are drummers of ideas—that is, professors, teachers, writers, and artists.8

The reaction of many intellectuals to Stevenson's defeat may be taken as an illustration of my point about their real strength despite their professed weakness. They acted throughout the campaign as if they were up for election: they identified themselves with Stevenson's pathos as well as with his lovely wit. They saw the campaign through his eyes as an Oxford Union debate in which the opposition mulishly refused to answer "points" or explain contradictions. The same over-ideological outlook allowed them to be

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Cf. Eric Larrabee's discussion of the Gathings Committee majority and minority reports in "Obscenity and Morality," address to the American Library Association, Los Angeles, June, 1953.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Many of the humanists are in a paradoxical position, for they suffer the vulnerabilities without attaining the glamour and glory of other academics—one reason, possibly, for their frequent very great resentment of their colleagues who lay claim, justified or not, to the mantle of science.

bemused by the notion, so strenuously promulgated by F. D. R., that the Democrats were the party of virtue and progress, the Republicans of reaction. Surprised, as I hardly think they should have been, that Eisenhower swept the country, they felt they had been rejected. In their despair, they neglected the impressive fact that their man, their identity, had garnered over 27,000,000 votes against one of the most appealing candidates ever put up, and in spite of all the inherited handicaps of the Democrats. Perhaps, like any rising class, we intellectuals do not feel we are rising quite fast enough, and momentary setbacks unduly dismay us.

#### III

As one move toward greater differentiation, we should review some case histories of people who have refused to make concessions urged upon them, and consider whether and to what extent they have suffered for it. I think that such a study would show how, for instance, a professor can call and be called names and survive unscathed. A study of the reasons why Harvard, Sarah Lawrence, Chicago, and many other places have not succumbed to the first trumpet blasts of investigating committees would seem to me both more illuminating and more important than to add to the well-rehearsed choruses of academic degradation. Without doubt, liberals as well as fellow travelers are under attack in many parts of this country. But are these places where they were formerly secure?

I think it likely that liberals teaching in small colleges in fundamentalist or reactionary communities are still less secure now.<sup>4</sup> And such people do need succor and defense. Articles in Mr. MacLeish's tone may give such people succor through recognition, if not clarification, of their plight, through giving labels to their mood. But by and large I would assume that The American Scholar circulates not in these areas, but in the larger centers

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> A balanced estimate would have to take account of shifts in the issues, manifest and covert, to which the community is sensitive. In 1890, Veblen was refused a post at St. Olaf's College because he "does not see the difference between science and religion," and "would treat the historical content of the Bible as he would handle an old document that one might find in China." (See Scandinavian-American Studies and Records, XV, 1949, pp. 128-9.) Neither such views nor sexual irregularities would cause a professor similar trouble today. In our time, professors may have become conformists in many respects—there may be fewer "characters" among us—but I am struck with how many, provided they are anti-Communist, have held on to Marxist views without being vilified or pressured.

where, in sizable groups, views such as Mr. MacLeish has expressed are not news. In these latter groups, there seem to exist a blind fright and frenzy about witch hunts, all committees and their membership being lumped together in a composite caricature.

From the Hiss case<sup>5</sup> we may perhaps date the beginning not only of the excessive power and renown of many Johnny-come-lately anti-Communists, but also, on the other side, of what might be thought of as a new united front in some liberal colleges and universities, admission to which is gained by denouncing witch hunts and refusing to co-operate with them. Much as the Communists were forgiven their earlier treacheries when they joined in the Resistance against the Nazis in occupied Europe, and indeed fought their way to leadership, so in the new American front the menace of McCarthy helps bring about a similar factitious solidarity among those who are sympathetic to, or apologetic about, or opposed to communism. In some colleges, professors who testify before the Velde or Jenner committees with dignity and restraint (often educating committee members in the process, as Hiss so notably failed to do) are slandered as appeasers. To the extent that Communists, by such tactics, can get non-Communists to claim the Fifth Amendment, they too can pass off their men as martyrs to principle. In the scramble, the real ethical problem—to what extent one should tell the committee not about oneself but about othersis obscured. The very term witch hunt is obscurantist.

It may be true that, as this new-found front gains momentum, in AAUP chapters and elsewhere, it will shift the context into which such articles as Mr. MacLeish's fall. While the view of America they bespeak is so dispiriting that in some circles a kind of

of I believe that Hiss, in his arrogant treatment of Chambers and the Congressional Committee, was doing the country a far more serious disservice than in his earlier, very likely inconsequential espionage and other efforts to influence foreign policy. If he had told the Committee, as less publicized witnesses have done since, how it happened that a more or less idealistic and successful young lawyer could get involved with the Communist Party, he would have contributed to clarification instead of mystification, and perhaps partially disentangled the knots of identification binding so many decent people to him and hence to the view that he was being victimized. It might have been revealed that his case had special elements (special guilts, special arrogances, special impatiences) and that therefore, despite appearances, it was not a generation on trial but a fringe. Perhaps Hiss thought he could brazen it out. As the square-jawed, clean-cut hero of the two, he would have a comic-strip advantage. Perhaps he was ashamed to disillusion his non-Communist friends and preferred to drag them down with him.

internal neutralism may be encouraged—why defend freedom if it is already beaten?—in united front circles these writings may well stiffen resistance to loyalty investigations, and thus in some degree serve to strengthen academic freedom. But this might turn out to be an ambiguous dividend, won only because many professors will have become afraid of being thought scared, and because many who share Mr. MacLeish's premises will have concluded that any intra-academic dissension is treachery. In my opinion, achievement of this unaerated conformism under the banner of non-conformity would be a confession of academic defeat and vulnerability.

Even critics of articles like Mr. MacLeish's may fall in with this kind of "don't wash dirty linen" clannishness: they may fear that his attitude would encourage European and Asian neutralism. Doubtless, many Europeans are already too inclined to accept some American intellectuals' estimate of their own situation. (În our tradition, what is critical always seems more plausible than what is approbatory.) And since the Soviet Union, Red China, their satellites and mass parties remain the chief threat to freedom. such writers as Mr. MacLeish may be criticized for giving indirect aid and comfort to the foreign foe. But at this point, I would come to their defense and say that we are not so weak as to need a unity chorus at home to persuade intellectuals abroad to love and admire us! Since I share Mr. MacLeish's enthusiasm for freedom of thought and expression, I gladly take the risks of Europeans or Indians overhearing our conversation, and drawing their own conclusions not the ones, I feel sure, that Mr. MacLeish would expect them to draw.

#### IV

It is characteristic of our times that we raise public-relations considerations, if only to reject them. I agree with the implication of Mr. MacLeish's article that we are not the men our ancestors were—we tend to be less rigid, more agreeable, more co-operative and conciliatory. In an earlier, less "other-directed" age, polemics could be carried on, as they still are among Europeans, with fewer restraints based on one's resonance with the other, one's awareness and sympathy and misgiving. Such "weaknesses," when judged by an older standard of intransigent self-righteousness, are among

those that Mr. MacLeish would perhaps like to see expunged in favor of the Spartan virtues he attributes to an earlier America. In Lionel Trilling's novel, *The Middle of the Journey*, we can see the power of such virtues in Mrs. Croom or in Maxim, as against the hesitant and conciliatory Laskell, in whom all voices echo.

Yet if we are to find our way out of the tricky personal and social perils peculiar to our day, as well as out of those that afflict any given day, it does not profit us to strive for the moral athleticism and heroism that not even a William James could drill into us. We must work with the psychological tools available to us, and not waste time bemoaning the loss of those blunter ones our forefathers possessed. We know today, for example, that all communication is problematic, a trap of serried ambiguities and obscure consequences. One can hardly help bearing in mind for whom one is writing, even if one violently disagrees with Sartre's theory of "engagement." (I am aware that I am writing this for The American Scholar, not Life, the New American Mercury, or even The New Leader.)

However, a writer may make mistakes both about his audience and the pressures they are under: in aiming to challenge complacency wherever he finds it, he may instead strengthen it, or he may further harass people too wounded to listen.6 I have often been in just this dilemma, as a result of the domestic repercussions of the cold war, in my relations with students and audiences. For instance, when I speak, usually on non-political topics, in the Midwest or in smaller communities in the East, someone is almost sure to ask out of the blue what about Owen Lattimore or don't I think America is going Fascist or something of the sort. Often he turns out to be a Nation reader, isolated and bereft, decent and dogmatic. frozen in middle life into what may earlier have been a less spiky carapace of liberalism. He has been waiting eagerly for the coming of light and learning from the University of Chicago to help lift the siege he has been laboring under among his townsfolk: he wants to be told that he isn't crazy, but that the others are. What am I to do when I share his associates' opinions of his opinions, if not of his character and motives? Am I to add one more blow to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> For fuller discussion of this problem, see my article "Values in Context," American Scholar, XXII (1952), 29, 34 et seq.

his self-esteem? To deny my own principles to support his? The mixture of therapy with education is characteristic of our time, and we have no easy answer for a problem that would not have bothered the Victorians.

With students, similar problems arise. Before World War II, I had moderate good luck in getting totalitarian-minded students to chuck some of their stereotypes about America, even if they did not accept mine. When very little penalty, and often even kudos, befell the members of the Party-dominated student groups, I could attack their criticisms without seeming to attack them as individuals; one can do this with the young—their ideas are not affixed to them but are part of a diffuse process of development and discovery; individually, I could encourage them not to be intimidated by the fear of being thought bourgeois. They would not suspect me of worrying about the reputation of my university. Now, as I need hardly say, all that is changed. Radical-minded students have learned in high school or even earlier to be wary of adults; afraid of being seduced by expediency, they have put a kind of intellectual chastity belt around their views. Since some of the nobler-spirited young still want risk and emancipation fom parents, the educator who offers them a less clear and less violent set of ideas tends to be fanatically resisted.

Another curious kind of situation arises when the question of the books one uses in teaching comes under the scrutiny of an investigating committee. One of the general education courses in the College at Chicago was criticized by the Broyles Committee of the Illinois legislature because it assigned the Communist Manifesto and other writings of Marx and Engels. Before that, some of us had felt these works to be inappropriate for the particular course—for one thing, because the students had not yet had any historical background to understand the portrait of English industrial misery in the 1840's; for another, because we felt the course already too overweighted on the side of the "great books" as against more empirical or experimental materials. But ever since the investigation, the Manifesto has been frozen into the course: to replace it now would be regarded as a symbol of knuckling under to egregious, ill-meant criticism; and we and our students have become to that extent a captive audience.

While perhaps a majority of students in this course find Marx

dull-in a way, they feel they know all that, and it's irrelevant-a minority feels called upon to speak up for or about Marx, lest they conclude they have betrayed themselves. I hesitate to put students into a position where they must make such a choice (our course is required), but would prefer to have them select their Armageddons at their own time and place. And this is one reason among many why I am opposed to most teaching of social studies in the high schools or earlier, for neither students nor teachers can be protected there against at least some kind of inquisition; the result will either be mushy piety or muddled bravado: in neither case will it be critical understanding. The schools, I think, would do better to teach subjects less vague and less inviting to censorship, leaving the social studies until later or for independent student exploration.7 But again, the context makes it difficult to say this, or for the schools to do anything about their curricula, without being put in the position of seeming to bow to reaction, or to the intemperate attacks on John Dewey and progressive education. Thus, captive audiences spring up all around, precisely in the most advanced sections of the intellectual community.

I recall in this connection a conversation with the energetic editor of a liberal periodical who had suggested in one of his articles that there was something to be said for the investigating committees: they were not all vicious, and after all, Communist conspiracies had existed. As a result, he was bombarded by letters charging that now he, too, was betraying the cause, was giving in to hysteria, was leaving his loyal readers in the lurch. He *did* give in to hysteria—that of his readers—and decided to publish no more such articles. Who can blame him, for where will he find another audience if he alienates his present one?<sup>8</sup>

In sum, the current atmosphere tends to inhibit thought in ways

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> It is an ironic symptom of the vulnerability of the school system that even Mr. Mac-Leish, in search of an explanation for our "escape from freedom," turns at the end to attacking education! "The underlying failure," he writes, "is a failure of education." Educators are fond of this kind of boasting, which so greatly overestimates our role in the total culture.

<sup>8</sup> In her otherwise admirable article, "The Menace to Free Journalism in America," in The Listener, May 14, 1953, p. 791, Mary McCarthy goes too far, in my judgment, in seeing such instances of editorial subservience as typical. It has even become the formula of many magazines to provoke or needle their readers; and certainly many seek to stay ahead of them.

other than those generally recognized. United fronts for political action are one thing: intellectuals need lobbies and pressure groups just as do other minorities who in that way contribute to the pulling and hauling of American politics; but united fronts for intellectual understanding are as impotent as for artistic creation. In that area, each of us must go it alone and, on occasion, even muster the courage not to take a stand.

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But I would also maintain, at the same time and in the same connection, that the effort to rid ourselves utterly of cowardice is inhuman (it is analogous to the effort to rid the country utterly of corruption, communism, or McCarthyism). We must learn to fight battles while admitting our fear of the enemy, as the American soldier has increasingly learned to do. Otherwise, we encourage a needless martyrdom in some, and an excessive self-contempt in those many valuable people who cannot live up to the courage and stern morality our ancestors represent for us. A friend who recently visited some members of the New Deal government-in-exile in Washington wrote me that his own high spirits were taken as a kind of physiological affront. To be gay or glad about anything in these days is considered by many who share Mr. MacLeish's views to be a sign of idiocy, ill will, or both.

To be sure, the guilt for being well-off (or well-to-do) is a notable and not wholly negative feature of the American educated classes—we feel it vis-à-vis our own poor and vis-à-vis the ill-nourished of the rest of the world. Likewise, those of us who are reasonably safe from attack by school boards or investigating committees because, out of good luck, timidity, good judgment, or whatnot, we never flirted with communism, and because the hatred with which we have regarded communism is now widespread—we, too, do not feel quite happy in our security, even if we do not share the widespread conviction that liberals in general, as well as Communists and their fellow travelers, are being victimized. As intellectuals, we the "Pollyannas" inevitably and properly ask ourselves if we can be right when the country is in some rough measure with us and so many respected intellectuals are against us. In any case, we cannot but be sympathetic with the many decent people who

are anguished, even if their anguish appears to us frequently self-defeating and the source for a monotonous set style of talking about America.

But I regret that they do not see that we in America now live in what in many ways is a great age. Terrible things are happening, but wonderful things too, and the former do not cancel out the latter any more than they do in one's personal life. The sudden rise of millions of people to relative affluence has intensified the struggle—no new thing in America—between the "old," Easternoriented merchant and professional middle classes and the "new," half-educated, small-business and small-town-manufacturing middle classes. In this confrontation, an astonishing number of the latter seek culture or worldliness in a benevolently energetic way —the heroine of South Pacific, for an exotic instance. But another group, as I have indicated above, feels put upon and dominated by the intellectuals who seem to control or at least understand the respectable and influential people, media and opinions; the very ferocity with which these anti-intellectuals sometimes try to outlaw the worldly and the educated is a sign of their resentment of their inferior status in the traditional hierarchies of prestige and comprehension. We are witnessing not only a tremendous increase in the number of intellectuals in the occupational structure, but an anxious resurgence of some aspects of Populism. This springs not merely from rural areas, so greatly diminished, but also from the half-urbanized and far from urbane city folk for whom nationalism provides an identity of sorts when all else shifts.

This is true not only of nationalism, but of other narrower groupings. The Pole in Cicero who has helped build a family, a parish, a neighborhood which Negroes threaten to invade, thereby evicting him (and where shall he begin over again?), may find in a crusade against intellectuals some surcease of his own guilt for his inability to sacrifice to the values of tolerance and charity that respectable teachers, media, and pastors urge upon him, much of the status which he has precariously erected. The violence of his response makes him at least momentary prey for politicians who refuse to abide by the orderly rules of their body, just as he wants to smash the orderly rules of property and mobility which permit anyone with the money to buy a house, and hence school his children, anywhere.

Increasingly, Congress and our state legislatures have become more democratic, more representative, and less corrupt; they often speak for these previously underprivileged millions, and less often for the "wise, the good, and the [very] rich." By continuing to think of our country as banker-ridden or boss-ridden, we have sought not to recognize these sometimes tenuous changes in the sources of social and personal control of violence and impulse, or to find scapegoats in "demagogues" who whip up "the people," otherwise innocuous. Doubtless, demagogues play a part in "legitimizing" frictions within and among the Americans—and how should there not be frictions, with vast new populations entering the market for goods and ideas in little more than a decade?

These large-scale and scarcely understood changes and resistances to change in the bases of American life and allegiance are likely to have far greater long-run effects on the climate of freedom in America than the tendencies to conformism within liberalism to which this article has mostly been devoted. We should not allow short-run rises or falls in temperature, even while we suffer from them or oppose them, to obscure these climatic changes. But by the same token, we cannot predict the outcome of the complex, sometimes silent, sometimes vocal struggle against the influence and prestige of intellect and education, nor is there any course we can take which will guarantee victory to the scholar. However, in personal or political life I think there are limits to the usefulness of speculation on ultimate outcomes for oneself, one's group, one's nation, the white race, the Western world, or even the planet. Defeat is not the worst fate. The Athenians were "defeated." So were many other great civilizations. We must recognize the tragedy of every loss, every defeat, without banking too much on the quantifiable measure of longevity as proof of value. To become too fascinated by eventualities of destruction is not only not the way to ward them off, but a way to distract ourselves from equally important questions about America: Why, for instance, are Americans often so anxious and unhappy, when Europeans, who live much closer to military or economic disaster, are so sanguine in their personal lives, often expressing philosophies of despair with exuberant arrogance? Why are American young people so frequently aimless, lacking private passions and pursuits, when a greater va-

#### SOME OBSERVATIONS ON INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

riety of skilled careers is open to them than ever before? Why in intellectual circles is there so much malice, when there are jobs and prestige and tasks enough for everybody and to spare? The American culture—high, low and middle—nearly always lacks the gamut of qualities which our best and most creative spirits have evoked and represented, and the list of reasons for our not having become the promised land is endless—not to be dealt with by such general terms as "loss of faith" or "growth of reaction." Since small actions can have large consequences, the future of America is as bewilderingly open as the present is opaque. Nevertheless, it seems to me that individuals in America have still an undiminished potential for good and great, rich and fortunate lives. In living up to this potential, we express our freedom.

### A Note

#### ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

MY DIFFICULTY IN FOLLOWING MR. RIESMAN is a result, I think, of the fact that his article reads a little like a controversy overheard in the next room: one never finds out who the other parties to the quarrel are or why the voice went up in the first place. So far as my own piece is concerned, he seems to have two objections to it, the first of which is stated precisely enough: he disapproves of my concern (at least in the columns of The American Scholar) with the current wave of attacks on the liberty of the individual mind and conscience. This concern, which he finds to be fairly prevalent among American "intellectuals"—i.e., Americans who read and think—he regards as based on an unworthy fear. As for the attacks, McCarthyism cannot, he assures us, be eliminated. The implication is that it should not be opposed—at least strongly—at least in this magazine.

Neither contention is very persuasive. Any man who mistakes for fear the indignation of those who detest and mean to oppose the increasingly shameless attacks on the American tradition of in-

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dividual liberty has a lower opinion of human nature and a feebler attachment to liberty than would seem justifiable. As for McCarthyism, the disease may be ineradicable, but it is precisely in the continuing struggle against it, in all its forms and at all levels of the national conscience, that effective freedom consists. The open-mindedness for which Mr. Riesman pleads is noble enough, but there are some things as to which an unwillingness or an inability to make up one's mind is not noble. The recent report of the special committee of the American Society of Newspaper Editors on the questioning of the editor of the New York Post by Senator McCarthy will serve, in this connection, as a useful commentary on Mr. Riesman's views.

Mr. Riesman's second objection to my piece is not so clearly stated but apparently has to do with the fact that the argument is "hortatory." This impression is reinforced by the editor of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, who writes, in a letter addressed both to Mr. Riesman and to me, which summarizes the matter, that Mr. Riesman has expressed, in conversation, the view that my "Loyalty and Freedom" "represented a tendency among talented liberals and intellectuals to exhort rather than analyze." If this is the position, Mr. Riesman has a bear by the tail—a vastly larger bear than A. MacLeish or even the talented liberals and intellectuals themselves. In effect he is using my quite unworthy piece to challenge (on his own behalf? . . . on behalf of the social sciences? . . .) a kind of writing familiar to all literatures, of which Milton was perhaps the foremost practitioner in English, and to which Aristotle devoted a very famous book. The use of words to persuade has always been considered to include the use of words for analysis, but the proposition that the use of words for analysis should supersede the use of words to persuade is novel. If this is indeed Mr. Riesman's thesis, I should like to see it pursued, independently of personalities, at the high level where the discussion belongs and with the Areopagitica as proof and example.

### Education for Privacy

#### MARTEN TEN HOOR

In view of the hundreds of conferences which have been held on liberal education, it would seem to be impossible to say anything new on the subject. Since there seems to be nothing new to say, one must, in order to be original, be contrary, eccentric or partisan. I have chosen to be partisan. The proposition to be defended is, frankly, a half-truth. If it can be established, there will be some cause for satisfaction; for the establishment of a half-truth is not a bad average in this complex and confused world. There is the justification, moreover, that the other, and possibly the better, half has in our day had practically all of the attention.

Stated concretely, the proposition is this: Never in the history of the world have there been so many people occupied with the improvement of so few. To sharpen the point by a specific example: Never have there been so many people making a good living by showing the other fellow how to make a better one. If you are skeptical, I recommend that you try this exercise—add up, as of the current date, the social workers, planners and reformers; the college presidents, deans and professors; the editors of magazines, journals and newspapers (not forgetting college newspapers); almost everybody in Washington, D.C., during recent years; and the tens of thousands of miscellaneous social-minded folks who attend conferences, workshops and institutes organized for the improvement of the human race. Subtract that figure from the total population of this country, and compare this figure with a corresponding figure for, say, the year 1900. You will then see what I mean when I say that this is the era of undiscriminating allegiance to good causes. To come nearer home, compute the sum of all college and uni-

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versity presidents, deans and professors who have in the last five years attended meetings devoted to the improvement of education. Compare that figure with the number of those who remained on the campus working and you will find proof even in academia.

As further evidence, and as a striking symptom, there is the recent popularity of educational surveys. Most states and many institutions have experienced several. I have lived through eleven, without noticeable improvement in myself or my neighbors. Note the procedure and the technique, for there you will find the moral. The surveyors are always from another state or another institution. This is in accordance with the well-known principle that an expert is an ordinary person who is away from home. These outsiders are brought in because of their objectivity, objectivity being the capacity for discovering faults abroad which you cannot recognize at home. To be a good educational surveyor—or any kind of social analyst, for that matter—you must have a sharp eye for foreign motes but a dull one for domestic beams. You must be a contented extrovert, so that, after diagnosing the faults of others, you can continue to live in perfect comfort with your own.

I must confess that I view all this indiscriminate altruism with a jaundiced eye. It does seem to me that these days there are too many leaders and too few followers; too many preachers and too few sinners-self-conscious sinners, that is. If this were an illustrated article, I would insert at this point a wonderful cartoon I saw not long ago. A little boy was asking an obviously astounded and embarrassed father, "But if we're here to help others, what are the others here for?" Nobody has time these days to improve himself, so busy is he with attempts to improve his neighbor. There is something wrong with that equation. It seems to me that it is time to try to balance it. I suggest that this can be done by shifting some weight from one side to the other, by shifting the emphasis from social improvement to self-improvement. I suggest that over the door of every academic cubicle there should hang the sign which Thoreau had over the door of his hut: "My destiny mended here, not yours." In short, I propose to make a plea for education for privacy.

#### EDUCATION FOR PRIVACY

Before undertaking to identify some of the elements of this type of education, I should like to offer some justification of my skepticism concerning the present emphasis on social-mindedness in education. To begin with, it is so easy to assume that your neighbor is much worse off than yourself. The universality of this tendency is undoubtedly accounted for psychologically by its attractive byproducts. The assumption produces a feeling of comfort. If there is some slight suspicion that all is not well within, it is compensating to concentrate on the plight of one's neighbor. Since attention to him is distracting, it keeps the individual from worrying about himself. To do something about a neighbor's ignorance also makes one feel virtuous. This absorbing concern for the improvement of one's neighbor is undoubtedly a product of civilization. It is doubtful if primitive man worried much about it. The cannibal, in fact, represents the other extreme: he uses his neighbor solely for his own improvement.

In the second place, I doubt if the reformer always has the wisdom necessary to direct the lives of so many people—but this is certainly assumed. How many people are there who have demonstrated the capacity to prescribe for others? If an individual makes a mistake in trying to improve himself, this is not so serious; but consider the consequences if he has induced all his neighbors to do the same thing. History is filled with examples of self-confident leaders who led their followers straight to a common catastrophe. The fact is that we still know so little about human personality in the concrete. To be sure, there are excellent textbook pictures, with revealing analytical tables and graphs. But this is personality in the abstract. Any physician will tell you that he rarely finds a textbook picture in a patient. Not only is every human being a complex with variations, but there are the environment in which that complex functions and the accidental circumstances which confuse the vision and disrupt life.

Nor has the reformer too much reason for assuming that he has discerned the good life for his neighbors. Let us take as a familiar example the characteristic projection by parents into the lives of their children. This is something we can readily understand and,

because it is suffused with parental affection, forgive. But how many parents are there who realize that each child is to some extent a new complex of elements and who can bring themselves to substitute that confounding reality for the fond subjective creation? Too often the recommendation of a way of life is nothing more than the advocacy of a personal preference.

From subjectivism in this sense of the term there is no complete escape. Even leadership is personalized in an individual. Hitler was an individual: he spun his fantastic and criminal notions out of his own warped private personality. It is therefore terribly important that everything shall be right in the reformer before he undertakes to reform others. "Nobody," says a character in Norman Douglas' South Wind, "has the right to call himself well disposed towards society until he has grasped the elementary fact that the only way to improve society is to improve oneself." And may I suggest in this connection that a major in the social sciences does not automatically qualify a student for social leadership?

Further reason for doubt is to be found in the characteristic reactions of the hypersocial-minded. They become so indignant when people resist their ministrations. They are so determinedly selfish in their unselfishness. Ideas, particularly ideas designed for the improvement of others, so quickly become inflated. In extreme cases they devour themselves. How antagonistic even educators become over professional differences as to how the ignorant should be rendered less so! Note the bitterness between rival reform groups. Let us not forget that human beings have killed one another in the mass even on the authority of their religions. Note how political leaders fall out, quarrel, conspire, injure one another in their unselfish efforts to save the country. In the absence of sophistication and modesty, reform notions grow into delusions; their advocates become more and more autocratic; leadership becomes pathological; the desire to help one's fellow-men is transformed into fanaticism and tyranny—and societies become authoritarian.

Here lies the explanation of the tendency of hypersocial-mindedness to suppress individualism and to produce too much uniformity. There are good reasons for doubting the wisdom of this lack of interest in the individual as a unique personality. There is, to be-

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gin with, the obvious and inescapable fact that everybody is an individual. The higher the scale of life, the more individuals differ and the greater their potentialities for differing. Society must make provision for individual differences. Authoritarianisms of the type of national socialism and communism are primitivistic, for they propose to turn back the course of social change and to establish societies in which individuals shall have a status more closely resembling that of ants, bees, or even of atoms or electrons than of human personalities. They have forgotten, or propose to ignore, the incontrovertible fact that the great works of art, literature, music, philosophy, religion and science—that is, the world's great manifestations of excellence and leadership—were the products of intensely individual persons. Indeed, some of the world's great geniuses have been self-centered, unsocial and iconoclastic, with little or no interest in the improvement of their fellow-men.

But society can well afford that. A regimented society will not only suppress and possibly ultimately breed out these "exaggerated" individuals, but will generally discourage the manifestations of the adventurous and original spirit. Government and education designed to do this will bring about a tragic cultural impoverishment in human life; for individual differences enrich life, they stimulate the intelligence and the imagination, and they invite comparison and criticism. They keep the individual alive as an individual, and not merely as a bearer of the racial genius or a servant of the state.

It is true that modern life requires a certain amount of regimentation. Individuals obviously cannot be permitted to run amuck. At least the great majority of persons must adapt themselves to other persons. Mechanical contrivances, such as traffic lights, must replace individual judgment; laws are to some extent substitutes for individual choice. But let us not forget that it is not the basic purpose of these substitutes to repress individuality, but rather to make possible a more general and richer realization of individuality. It is not the purpose of social organization to reduce man to the subhuman, but to create more favorable opportunities for the realization of what is uniquely human.

The need of complex societies for a high degree of organization is one reason why so much attention is focused on the improvement

of the other fellow. Especially in a democracy, where everyone is more or less free to advocate schemes for the improvement of society, lively and self-confident minds are inclined to expend their intellectual and emotional potential on reform movements. The attention of the reformer is consequently drawn away from contemplation of the state of his own soul. Since he is so happily exercised in improving others, the habit of self-examination gradually atrophies. How then can he be sure that he is the right person to prescribe for his neighbors? Should he not stop now and then to take an inventory of his resources? Does he in fact have these resources? It is because I have serious doubts of this sort, and because of the increasing neglect in education of attention to the accumulation of these resources, that I feel it time to make a plea for education for privacy.

What now are the essential elements of this education for privacy? In speaking of elements it is of course implied that the ideal construct of these elements constitutes an organized whole, a personality. It is this ideal at which we aim, though we know full well that in any concrete individual, no matter how well educated after the formula which we shall propose, one or the other desirable characteristic is certain to be under- or overemphasized.

The first requirement, clearly, is to learn how to think—not out loud or in print, but privately. The thinker himself, not his neighbor, is to be the beneficiary. To think does not mean to spend hours in idle daydreaming or in vagrant imaginings, or to make occasional impulsive sallies at ideas which happen to appear before the attention. The reference is certainly not to the semi-somnolent and comfortable ruminations which go on in the wandering mind of an inattentive student in the classroom. What is meant is systematic reflection, the constant purpose of which is to bring order out of the multiplicity and variety of things in which the human being is immersed.

To be sure, many people go through life with their senses alert, observing and savoring in generous measure the richness of the world about them. But what they experience they retain only in the form of materials for recollection. The mind gradually ac-

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cumulates a rich inventory of goods, which can be brought out on display when there is social opportunity for it. But the relationship of these resources in the mind is one of mere contiguity, like that of goods in a department store. Experience has not resulted in an over-all understanding because it has not been systematically thought about. Such individuals

... see all sights from pole to pole, And glance, and nod, and bustle by, And never once possess [their] soul Before [they] die.

To possess one's soul in an intellectual sense means to have found some answer, or partial answer, to the questions: What is the nature of this world in which I find myself, what is my place in it, and what must be my attitude toward it? The problem is one of intellectual and spiritual orientation.

The benefits of such intellectual and spiritual adaptation have been extolled by the wise men of all ages and all countries. A "view of life" prepares us for what life brings us, for what happens to us in our physical environment, and most important of all, for what people turn out to be and for what they do. To be spiritually and intellectually lost in the world, on the contrary, is to be unarmed and helpless. A disorganized mind is unprepared for reality and easily frustrated. The fate that awaits the individual so afflicted is to be always a stranger and a wanderer in the world. The "lost soul" of literature, the ultimate in tragic creation, suffers from this great spiritual illness.

It may be unfortunate, but it is a fact that the sharper and livelier the intelligence and the more sensitive the spirit, the more serious the danger of disorientation. The simple-minded find life simple. Plants find themselves easy to live with, no doubt; for it cannot be difficult to vegetate successfully. It is not likely that the cow's ruminations are philosophical. Man, for better or worse, is a rational animal. The more he thinks, the greater the need of organization among his ideas. The more subjects a student studies in college, the more extensive the potential disorder of his mind. It is not surprising that the scholarly mind, lost in a Båbel of learning,

seeks escape into a clearly defined speciality, and the practical mind, as soon as its owner has permission, into the comforts of a business, a profession, or domesticity. To be sure, we must integrate the curriculum. But what good is this if the professor's mind remains perched on its gaunt pinnacle or secluded in the laboratory?

The systematic way to the attainment of the organization of ideas is through philosophy and religion. It is true that the great intellectual constructions of the metaphysicians are not available to all men, and that even to the initiated they sometimes offer but poor comfort. Moreover, all of us have known individuals of great simplicity and humbleness of mind, quite untutored in dialectic, who somehow and in the simplest terms have securely located themselves in the cosmos. Especially in the realm of religious experience do we find examples of this. The spirit seems to have found peace in terms of some all-embracing conviction or great renunciation. But this is not often possible for the inquisitive and analytical mind. To cast all burdens upon the Lord in one grand resolve sometimes implies ignorance of the nature of those burdens. There is only consciousness of their oppressive weight, but no understanding of their nature or causes. To be sure, the critical intelligence may also come ultimately to make this renunciation, but it will not feel justified in doing so until it has reflected upon causes and relationships and seen the problem of human trouble and sorrow whole. The solution must be a conquest, not an escape.

For this, the mind certainly needs philosophy, sacred or secular. No learned profession, however, can offer the inquiring mind an official formula which every man need only apply in order to be permanently on understanding terms with the world. To be sure, there are systems of metaphysics, sacred and secular, from which the troubled spirit can choose a ready-made synthesis. But this does not make the chosen system of ideas an integral part of the inner personality. Intellectual orientation to the world must be something more than an acquisition; it must be an organic growth. The student should by all means seek out the great religious and philosophical thinkers, study their systems, and add their insights to his own. But in the last analysis he must work out his own solution, for such a solution must be the end product of his own reflection in the

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context of his *own* experience. Only through the alchemy of private reflection do philosophical ideas become private resources. Only then will they be available in time of crisis. When the normal course of existence is interrupted by conflict and frustration, it is a bit late to begin developing fundamental guiding ideas; that is the time to apply them.

A dramatic example of the saving grace of such resources is related by Admiral Byrd in his book on his expedition to the South Pole, entitled Alone. He had been left behind by the expedition in a dugout located several feet below the surface of the icecap. From this he periodically emerged through a vertical tunnel to make scientific observations. It happened that the heater in his subterranean shelter developed a leak of which he was not aware. Before he realized it, he had been dangerously poisoned and he became seriously ill. During his convalescence he found himself struggling to overcome not only the physical damage done to his body, but also a deep spiritual depression, an obstinate conviction of the meaninglessness of life, which threatened to overwhelm him. There was no physician or psychoanalyst or cleric available. His fellow-explorers would not return for months. He was absolutely alone. He had to guide himself out of this slough of despair. This he did, after many agonizing days, by steady thinking, by "digging down into" his intellectual resources. And it was then, to use his own homely but vivid phrase, that he "uncovered the pay-dirt of philosophy." He did not then collect the materials of his readjustment; he used them to recover his sanity. In this crisis, what would he have done without these resources?

But periods of crisis are not the only time when man needs an orderly mind. If a ship is to hold its course it needs a steady helm in good weather as well as in bad. I hasten to remark that this figure of speech has serious limitations, for a navigator has his chart prepared when he begins his voyage. Man, on the contrary, is faced with the problem of making a chart as he goes along. As a matter of fact, the plan of life is for every man to some extent an unconscious precipitate of his experience. We are not completely free agents: compulsion and fate, in the form of the physical world, our fellow-men and social institutions, push the individual this way

and that. What happens to him and what he becomes are clearly the result of a complex of inner and outer compulsions, over many of which he has no control.

We are not here primarily concerned with action, however, but with interpretation. In philosophical reflection, the individual to some extent plays the part of the Greek chorus. He observes himself as actor in a cosmic setting. If he does so systematically, he will gradually discern not only his own role, but the direction of the whole drama. Only when he understands the meaning of the play can he orient himself in it. Such an understanding, vague and incomplete though it may be, will enable him to achieve his own view of life. If he is so fortunate as to see (what seems to him) the truth and to see it whole, he will thenceforth have a vision of the future as well as an understanding of the present and the past. If a rational man does not do that, why should he consider himself the crown of creation? If he does accomplish this, he can exult with the poet Dyer:

My mind to me a kingdom is; Such present joys therein I find As far exceeds all earthly bliss

Look, what I lack my mind supplies. Lo, thus I triumph like a king, Content with that my mind doth bring.

In education for privacy, however, more is involved than philosophical orientation to the cosmos. There is equally urgent need for education in the establishment and maintenance of moral harmony. From the days of primitive religion, through Greek tragedy, the Christian epic of sin and salvation, and modern psychology, Freudian and non-Freudian, to contemporary existentialism, there runs the theme of the uneasy conscience. The dramatic specter of moral guilt is the principal character in many of the greatest creations of literary genius. No matter what the learned explanation, the psychological state is one of inner moral disharmony. Though it may have outer causes, it is a private affliction and must be cured privately. In moments of despair or periods of cynicism we may doubt the existence or discernibility of moral meaning in the universe; but such a conclusion does not relieve the individual of the

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necessity for solving his personal moral problem. Even complete moral negativism, if not itself a moral philosophy, leaves the individual no recourse but to establish a private moral order in his life of action and reflection.

Here again, the more sensitive the individual, the greater the potentiality for disorganization. It is the sensitive who are the most deeply wounded by moral indifference, disorder and brutality. The predisposing causes of moral disorganization may be in the people and the things we love, in the institutions which demand that we conform to their customs and taboos, in the great world which so often mocks our need for moral significance and order. But a vision of the good life, the spirit must have; for devoid of it, the imagination is without moral perspective, conduct without guiding principles, and action without trustworthy habits. For an individual so unprepared for life, confusion will efface meaning and create frustration, with the onset in the case of the unusually sensitive spirit of pathological disturbances which may for a period or for a lifetime destroy happiness. Education for privacy must therefore include the education of the moral personality, the gradual acquisition by the self of moral resources. Here, too, there are available to the student in generous measure the works of the great philosophical and religious thinkers, for probably no one of the persistent problems of life has had more of their systematic and concentrated attention. It is relevant here to note that the previously discussed philosophical orientation to the world is sometimes the foundation for moral orientation.

A third requirement in the education of the personality is the development of emotional stability. Of all the immediate causes of unhappiness, emotional disorder is unquestionably the most serious and the most common. Currently there is a feeling that under the pressures of modern life its incidence is steadily increasing. Unfortunately, emotions are the component of the personality about which we know the least, as modern science has come to realize. Our ignorance is largely a consequence of the fact that traditionally the emotions have been considered to be effects rather than causes. Preoccupation with the flattering conviction that nan is a rational animal has been attended with the assumption that therefore our

emotions are under the domination of the reason. This assumption has been one of the basic tenets of formal education, though puzzled parents and self-conscious adults no doubt have all along had their suspicions. In our day, educators are being enlightened by psychology and the medical sciences on the subject of the devastating power of the emotions. Moreover, the modern conception of the integrated personality has redirected our approach to this subject, so that now we hypothesize and investigate in terms of interrelations and interactions. The simple classical vision of the reason enthroned in the psyche, making judgments, issuing commands, and directing the conscious life of the individual, is difficult to maintain in the face of the past record and the current spectacle of human behavior.

Let us grant that the contemporary individual lives in an age in which, as Goethe put it, "humanity twists and turns like a person on a sickbed trying to find a comfortable position." To offset this, however, he has the advantage of a better understanding of the compulsive and disruptive power of the emotions. He is aware of their insidious tendency to direct his thinking and affect his judgment. He knows that they feed on themselves and that, if they are of the destructive kind, they can bring him to the verge of despair. He knows that they can completely disorient him, isolating him from the friendship and sympathy of his fellow-men and estranging him from the beauty and utility of the world. He must learn that there is little he can do to remove the external causes, the irritants in his social and physical environment. In order to maintain or restore emotional stability within himself, he must learn to control the effects of these irritants on himself. Education of the emotions is education in self-control, in equanimity and serenity.

To these three objectives of education for privacy—the attainment of a philosophical point of view, a steady vision of the good life, and serenity of spirit—I should like to add one more: the individual should be able to live entertainingly with himself. He should accumulate resources on which he can draw when he is at leisure. The universal symptom of the absence of such resources is the homely but hapless state of boredom. It is an anomalous condition of the spirit, a state of indifference lying between pain and pleasure. Neither the mind nor the hands can find anything inter-

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esting to do. In contrast with the other troubles of the spirit which have been mentioned, there is little excuse for this great emptiness. For there is a marvelous cure for boredom, universally available, readily tapped and virtually inexhaustible: the fine arts.

This claim hardly needs defense. Nor is it necessary to enumerate the arts and to identify their respective potentialities for beguiling the mind and the heart. For illustrative purposes, however, let us consider one form of art enjoyment which is available to virtually every normal human being, young or old, learned or simple, saint or sinner—reading. Its great virtue for education for privacy is that it is a strictly private experience. No other human being is necessary to the reader at the moment of reading. He can take his book with him to the jungle or the desert, on the ocean or the mountain top. He can select his company at will, and rid himself of it by a turn of the hand. It is potentially an inexhaustible resource: all ages of history; all countries; all varieties of human beings, and even of animals and plants and physical things; the entire range of human thoughts and feelings, hopes and fears, conquests and failures, victories and defeats; the real and the ideal—all are available at the turn of a page for the reader's contemplation and understanding.

When we measure the impoverishment of him to whom this world is literally and figuratively a closed book, whose ear is deaf to music and whose eye blind to the glories of painting and sculpture, we come to realize the responsibility of liberal education for instruction in the arts. I say instruction purposely, because I believe that the presentation of opportunities for enjoyment and training in appreciation are not enough; there should also be instruction and encouragement in the production of art. As even the bungling amateur knows, there is no greater source of pleasure than creative activity. The training of the most modest talent is an enrichment of a personality and develops another private resource for leisure hours. Even the unsuccessful attempt to create art, moreover, clarifies the understanding of art. To be sure, just as it is not necessary to trouble our friends with our thoughts, so it is not necessary to bore our friends with our productions. It is, after all, not the improvement of the neighbor but the improvement of oneself that is the immediate object of education for privacy.

An understanding of the world, a vision of the good life, serenity of spirit, appreciation and practice of the fine arts—these, then, are the elements of the integrated personality, the development of which is the immediate object of liberal education. These are the resources which are accumulated in the course of education for privacy. Why, now, is it so important for every individual to possess these resources? In the first place, simply because he is going to need them. We never know when we are going to lose our external resources, our public possessions. Without private resources the individual has nothing to turn to when disappointment, frustration or misfortune become his lot. In the great depression which is still vivid in our memories, there were many individuals who possessed only external resources. When they lost these, life was over for them. They could not go on living with themselves because of their intellectual, moral, emotional and artistic poverty. He who possessed these resources, however, could exclaim with Thoreau: "Oh, how I laugh when I think of my vague, indefinite riches! No run on the bank can drain it, for my wealth is not possession but enjoyment."

Resources of the spirit are like savings: they must be accumulated before they are needed. When they are needed, there is no substitute for them. Sooner or later, the individual faces the world alone, and that moment may overwhelm him if he has no resources within himself. Distraction helps but little and betrays us when we least expect it. We can escape our physical environment and our neighbors, but we cannot escape ourselves. Everyone with any maturity of experience and self-knowledge knows that the loneliest moments are sometimes experienced in the midst of the greatest crowds and the most elaborate entertainments. "... the man at war with himself is at war, though he sits in a garden surrounded by flowers and singing birds," says the novelist Cloete in Congo Song.

And now, in conclusion, I wish again to pay my respects to the other half-truth, the improvement of others, which was so cavalierly dismissed in the beginning of this essay. That objective together with the other objective, self-improvement, compose the whole truth, which is the grand objective of liberal education. Education

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for privacy and education for public service constitute education of the whole personality. He who is not educated for privacy is hardly fit to educate others. The blind cannot lead the blind. The man who is not at peace with himself cannot be trusted to lead his fellow-men in the ways of peace. The unbalanced leader is certain to unbalance the society in which he functions. Even the leader who is in intent on the side of the good but who is a fanatic will stimulate fanaticism in his followers, arouse dogmatism and bigotry, and induce oppression and cruelty. When he is on the side of evil, he will lead his followers into such excesses and wickedness as will shame all humanity, and which even the innocent will wish to forget as soon as possible. Social pathology must in the last analysis be focused on the sickness of the individuals who compose the society. It is pure imagination, if not nonsense, to ascribe the ignorance, unbalance and wickedness of a collection of human beings to a mysterious social entity such as the group mind or the social organism. We might as well divorce the concept of an epidemic from the notion of the individuals who are ill, or ascribe hunger to a societal stomach. People mislead one another exactly as they infect one another. The psychopathic leader is potentially as dangerous as the carrier of an infectious disease.

The safe leader, in terms of the elements of education for privacy, is one who understands his place in the world and can thus envisage the place of his fellow-men; who can morally respect himself and can thus be respected by others; who has learned to control his emotions and can thus be trusted to exert control over others; who has learned to live in peace and contentment with himself and can thus with propriety urge others to do likewise.

We are living in a world and in a time when powerful leaders with millions of fanatical followers are committed to the forcible regimentation of their fellow-men, according to formulas which have no initial authority but that of their own private dogmatism. They not only refuse to recognize the right of private thought and personal conscience to be considered in the management of public affairs, but they have abolished the concept of the individual as a private personality and have reduced him to the level of the bee in the hive. To restore the individual to his former dignity as a

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# Souls Among Masterpieces

## The Solemn Style of Modern Critics

## WALLACE W. DOUGLAS

A FTER SOME THOUGHT, but without, of course, pretending to exhaust the possibilities, I have finally decided on two sentences as my favorite examples of the rich and complex solemnity of modern critical writing. One sentence is by F. R. Leavis:

There is, too, Emily Brontë, who has hardly yet had full justice as a poet; I will record, without offering it as a checked and deliberated critical judgment, the remembered impression that her *Cold in the earth* is the finest poem in the nineteenth-century part of the *Oxford Book of English Verse*.<sup>1</sup>

## The other is by Arnold Stein:

Wyatt seems to me the most important neglected poet of the English Renaissance.<sup>2</sup>

## Of course I am fond of others, like this one:

One can, in view of the body of poetic and historical documentation of the human encounter of love, broadly and perhaps a bit vulgarly distinguish three phases with respect to its consummation: a before, a during, and an after.<sup>3</sup>

## Or this one:

It is necessary, however, to consider the sexual aspects of a poet as related to his larger context. As Galsworthy has aptly pointed out in the preface to *The Forsyte Saga*, where sexual attraction is lacking, there can be little adjustment.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> F. R. Leavis, Revaluation, Tradition and Development in English Poetry (New York, 1947), p. 6.

Arnold Stein, "The Criticism of Wyatt," Kenyon Review, XIII (Autumn, 1951), 703.
 Robert Roth, "The Sophistication of W. H. Auden: A Sketch in Longinian Method," Modern Philology, XLVIII (1951), 197.

<sup>4</sup> Donald E. Hayden, After Conflict, Quiet (New York, 1951), p. 176.

<sup>•</sup> WALLACE W. DOUGLAS, assistant professor of English at Northwestern University, is a specialist in the history of iterary criticism and in the English romantic period. He is one of the editors of *The Critical Reader*, an anthology.

Or this one:

His book is marked by many striking insights, some tantalizingly undeveloped, like Mr. Turnell's realization of the essential homosexual resonances in the *Liaisons Dangereuses*....<sup>5</sup>

Each of these sentences has its own special charm, though on the whole a rather limited one, in spite of magnificent expressions like "human encounter of love" and "homosexual resonances." At first glance there might be a temptation to give high marks to them as worthy examples of opacity. But a second glance would show that they exemplify only the scientific diction of modern critical writing; and to be really perfect, they would need at least an overtone or two of the plight of man. So I come back to the sentences by Mr. Leavis and Mr. Stein as much more representative of current tendencies in critical writing.

Mr. Stein's sentence is short but by no means simple. On the surface he seems to be only setting up a new category for criticism—that of the "important neglected poet." But under that more intensive scrutiny which all serious criticism deserves, he is seen to be isolating<sup>6</sup> himself and his sensibilities from the pedagogical tradition (which he notices by citing the comments on Wyatt in some of the standard anthologies), if not indeed from the Tradition itself, since without some subject or agent for "neglected," the reader has to conclude that Mr. Stein is alone in his appreciation

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Leslie A. Fiedler, "The Critic's Excluded Middle," Kenyon Review, XIII (Autumn, 1951), 696.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Quotation marks can accomplish the same thing; compare their effect in the following sentences from Clifford Amyx, "Max Beckmann: The Iconography of the Triptychs," *Ibid.*, 610, 611, 612, 613.

<sup>&</sup>quot;If we are convinced that painting is no longer a matter of the 'pure eye,' as artists wanted it to be in the late 19th Century, and that it cannot be a pure didactic or 'instructional' instrument such as it may have been in earlier centuries, we are compelled to accept today some variation of a 'presentationalist' aesthetic. The painting is 'all there'; it may be seen."

<sup>&</sup>quot;... when the work will be seen from that 'distance' at which iconographers ordinarily approach their subject."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Beckmann has been accepted as one of the major painters of our time in spite of certain acknowledged 'difficulties' in meaning and imagery."

<sup>&</sup>quot;[Beckmann's paintings] have a complexity and 'ambiguity' comparable to much contemporary poetry."

<sup>&</sup>quot;A painting can 'communicate' before it is fully 'understood'. . . ."

<sup>&</sup>quot;The figure in the upper left [of the left panel in Departure] is wholly 'detached' by virtue of an enforced solipsism...,"

of Wyatt, confronted by the insensibility of Mr. Eliqt, as well as of Lieder, Lovett and Root. Indeed, the sentence may perhaps be even richer, since its rhetorical form seems to suggest that Mr. Stein and his aperçus are an island of light in a naughty world, surrounded by Saturday Reviewers of Literature, professors, and the dark ranks of Philistia, people who live in nasty little villas and belong to the Book-of-the-Month Club.

Mr. Leavis, too, is trying to make up a tradition for a poet. And like Mr. Stein, he asserts his perfect isolation from all those who have not had the wit or taste to give "full justice" to Emily Brontë as a poet. Right here Mr. Leavis proves that he is better than Mr. Stein at playing with the mannerisms of modern critical style. For with the expression "full justice as a poet," Mr. Leavis manages to suggest not only simple-mindedness in those who think of Emily Brontë solely as a novelist, but also a very real culpability. And this melodrama is further exploited in his offer to "record" merely a "remembered impression," not a "checked and deliberated critical judgment." Here Mr. Leavis is expressing that moral struggle, that enormous effort of pain and plight and glorious discovery with which modern critics color the (otherwise insignificant?) business of talking about and explaining books. As a solemnity, the result is especially good because it is written in a prevailingly flat, commonplace diction.

Most solemnities, one notices after a while, get their effect from a more vivid, even lush, diction than Mr. Leavis'. By now, cant adjectives like rich and complex, which are part of the traditional vocabulary of criticism anyway, no longer cause much surprise, however their meanings may be strained in the actual use. But there still must be some shock-value, I should think, to the more exuberant words that violate what an eighteenth-century critic would have called decorum. Thus, in a seriously philosophic review of a number of books concerned with semantics, there are references to "that proto-modern bulldozer The Meaning of Meaning," to "such pantry-maids as economics and sociology," to Gertrude Stein's "method of lumbering indirection and pseudo-litany [which] sometimes yields chubby half-truths," and to poetry being treated as "the beautician of nouns." These are good

phrases, and they add life if nothing else to a style that is otherwise filled with words like semiotic, iconic, energy-tension, and technosophic, in contexts which are not necessarily so technical as to require them. But the life becomes pretty faded when we read of a "highly charged tension between more or less incompatible meanings—between 'being' in the sense of plain empirical existence and 'being' in some incompletely defined sense that plows up our ordered reality-perspective in struggling for birth."

I suppose I should not object here to stylistic devices I would applaud in Shakespeare; and indeed, this sort of vigor, this nervousness and copiousness is certainly more tolerable than the wideranging borrowings from popular science or philosophy that the critics have to use to get at their very intense insights into literature. Thus stasis (a modern medical term, returned presumably to an original Greek literary usage) gets used for any pause or condition or state, and resonances (appropriated from classical physics, with perhaps a reference to Professor Pawling's theory) is used for what once were called overtones or suggestions. And there is talk of surface and extension, of tension and balance, of structure and texture. But these words—whatever their technical resonances—

<sup>7 &</sup>quot;When the technosophic mind does not, like Professor Carnap, go to the length of denying that poetry can have meaning and truth of its own, it may, in the very concessions it grants, reduce the poetic mode of expression to something misleadingly simple or even embarrassingly fatuous."

<sup>&</sup>quot;The real distinction between simile and metaphor is one of intent, depending on whether the trope is just a lazy attempt to get rid of a problem or is a challenge to a new problem, opening it up, expressing it, and keeping it alive in a metaphoric 'energy-tension,' manifested as a rule in the total context, the entire process of language, and not confined to a single word or phrase." The review referred to is by Philip Wheelwright, "Symbol, Metaphor, and Myth," Sewanee Review, LVIII (Autumn, 1950), 678-98.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Ibid. Or am I missing some sort of classical allusion in that rather disordered figure that joins plowing and struggling for birth?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> "The youthful, fiery Prometheus tries to warn the Old God that all is not well, that he must meet life's dangerous challenges, that he must break the comfortable stasis into which he has settled." Richard Chase, "Melville's Confidence Man," Kenyon Review, XI (Autumn, 1949), 135.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Jerry's frantic philosophical quest . . . covers pretty well worn ground so that, despite its intensity, it can let the story down into a stasis. . . ." Robert B. Heilman, "Tangled Web," Sewanee Review, LIX (Winter, 1951), 109.

<sup>10</sup> Compare with Mr. Fiedler's comment, p. 44; also this one: "Intellectually, [the liberal] preserves himself from self-knowledge by refusing to admit that moral choices have far-reaching consequences and that thought, no matter how ordinary or work-a-day, has its complex resonances of moral, mythical, religious, and cultural meaning." Chase, "Melville's Confidence Man," 138.

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are at least decently part of the general vocabulary. Other and more offensive words the critics have to borrow from just that jargon which as humanists they must of course complain of in the sociologists and psychologists:

[Iago] positivizes [love] into sex, into a series of cataloguable and manageable phenomena, involving chiefly the principles of satiety and variety.... Like all debunkers, Iago is partially correct; his view of the facts of sex has considerable soundness. But his mistake—and it is a philosophical mistake which must be distinguished from his mere efforts to destroy—is to confuse the facts of sex with the myth of love.

Specifically, [Lear] tries to measure his daughters' love; he tries to quantify it; he tries to secure a rational computation of what is not susceptible to this kind of estimate. . . . But in his passion to measure he is asking for quasi-logical prose formulations that are irrelevant and impossible.<sup>11</sup>

"Positivizes" and "quantify" are certainly bizarre; and I cannot find the adjective to describe an expression like "quasi-logical prose formulations," especially when applied to the action of the first scene of *Lear*. In the following, presumably the thought and its underlying melodrama are too complex to be carried by ordinary English idiom:

One does what one can. John Ransom and Allen Tate, for example, around the gaps of the unstatable tremendous, are models of the uncontrollable in pseudo-control.

The general poetry at the center of our times [takes from the work of Emily Dickinson] spontaneous snatched idiom and wooed accidental ineluctableness.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Robert B. Heilman, "The Lear World," English Institute Essays 1948 (New York, 1949), pp. 50, 51-2.

If, as I have heard colleagues say, sociology deals either with false problems (presumably problems not known to Cicero) or with obvious facts (presumably those known to Cicero), what is one to say about this list of the "four threats to illusion from which Shakespeare's mythical trajectories begin"? I list the threats in my own words, and thus may lose some of the implications of the original: (1) the actors were known to be merely actors, not the persons they portrayed; (2) women characters were played by boys; (3) the dead turn out to be alive, the actors rise for applause; (4) the play ends. The conclusion is that Shakespeare's "immediate problem was to deceive his audience." Leslie Fiedler, "The Defense of the Illusion and the Creation of Myth," Ibid., pp. 79-80.

<sup>12</sup> R. P. Blackmur, "Lord Tennyson's Scissors," Kenyon Review, XIV (Winter, 1952), 15. In a review in the Times Literary Supplement, January 9, 1953, p. 21, "spontaneous snatched idiom and wooed accidental inductableness" is cited as an example of Mr. Blackmur's ability to make a phrase that "makes a complicated perception precise." The word is set as "inductableness" also in Mr. Blackmur's Language As Gesture (New York, 1952), p. 435.

Myth, in its union with logos, comprises the totality of human existence. To achieve the reflection and substantiation of man's existence, it is bound to tend toward a totality, a conception implying an order so all-embracing that it becomes a cosmogony, a "creation." All myth culminates in cosmogony. It is the prototype of the inexpressible; it is primitive, yet of an inimitable simplicity. None of the mythical derivatives originating in later epochs of mankind, whether scholarly historical research, or historicapphy with its varieties—biographical and otherwise—or historical fiction has ever been or can ever become cosmogony. And yet, owing to their mythical heritage, they all aspire to a totality of a cosmogonic kind so as to become genuine creation.<sup>13</sup>

In the same way, I find it difficult to know what is meant by "The result is a totality, that refuses to be stricted to any one attitude," or by a "little but exceedingly dimensional story," or by a reference to a fictional method that can "implicate" two tendencies while transcending each.<sup>14</sup> With its slightly high melodrama, such diction as this seems to me to interfere with orderly communication.

II

Like Mr. Hubler, I "sometimes find our critical journals subtle to the point of secrecy"; and though I do not share with him the energy or the sense of responsibility which makes him, he says, rewrite an occasional paragraph to see what the words are all about, I am perfectly willing to accept his conclusion that, after the experiment, he finds that the "restated paragraph is not only clear, it is commonplace." This makes me wonder why the critics do not, in his phrase, have the courage of their simplicities. Would it be possible to answer that they are not aware of any simplicities in their criticism, because for the most part they are not talking about books or about their experience with books, or are doing so only in the first instance, and then not for very long?

<sup>13</sup> Herman Brock, "The Heritage of Myth in Literature," Chimera, IV (Spring, 1946), 34.

<sup>14</sup> Eunice Glenn, "Fantasy in the Fiction of Eudora Welty," A Southern Vanguard, ed. Allen Tate (New York, 1947), pp. 78-91. Elsewhere in the article Miss Welty's work is compared to Ethan Brand, The House of the Seven Gables, Pilgrim's Progress, Gulliver's Travels, "the rich prose of Sir Thomas Browne," seventeenth-century poetry, and to the work of Kafka, Proust, and "other best writers of this century."

<sup>15</sup> E. L. Hubler, "Three Shakespearian Myths: Mutability, Plenitude, and Reputation," English Institute Essays 1948, pp. 95-119.

#### SOULS AMONG MASTERPIECES

On the whole, I prefer this to another explanation that might be offered, that the critics strain their diction in a disingenuous attempt to conceal the simplicities that Mr. Hubler notices. A gracious substitution of unconscious for disingenuous might, as a matter of fact, make this a tenable notion, for then the following argument could hold. It is clear that modern critics feel to the point of obsession that they must avoid relativism, with all its connotations of modernity, scientism, and ethical nihilism. They also want to escape any contamination by the exclamatory, appreciative criticism of, for example, Saintsbury or William Lyon Phelps. As they keep saying, they want to write objective criticism, to talk about facts, about the concrete, the particular, the verifiable, the hard, the limited, the real. And I suppose it is this odd subservience to a naive conception of the scientific method and to a kind of critical positivism that makes a modern critic talk about the "ominously uncapitalized" sentence that begins the fourth section of Faulkner's "The Bear," and note that "Faulkner has even gone to the extreme of employing the single inverted comma in the conversations of the fourth section: the conventional sign of the speech contained within the speech—as against the double comma elsewhere."16 It would be difficult to imagine any part of language more coldly real than punctuation marks.

In this intense struggle to write objective criticism, to discuss only the real and the verifiable, the critic might easily, and more or less unconsciously, fall into the habit of formulating more or less scientific problems<sup>17</sup> in more or less scientific language; in this

<sup>16</sup> R. W. B. Lewis, "The Hero in the New World: William Faulkner's The Bear," Kenyon Review, XIII (Autumn, 1951), 649, 651.

<sup>&</sup>quot;mythical trajectories." Also this description of poetic composition, or rather, of the epistemological process behind the composition: "The poets therefore introduce the psychological device of the miracle. The predication which it permits is clean and quick but it is not scientific predication. For scientific predication concludes an act of attention but miraculism initiates one." (John Crowe Ransom, "Poetry: A Note in Ontology," The World's Body, New York, 1938, p. 142.) The load of connotation on "miracle" and "miraculism" does not at all change the fact that these sentences presuppose the early positivistic analysis of Richards, with its talk about "aesthetic" or "projectile" words and its distinction between "cognitive" and "expressive" uses of language; and so ultimately any criticism derived from these assumptions would consist of a description of the nature and quantity of neuropsychological changes effected by the poems as a stimulus in the mind, as a series of measurable responses.

case, the subject of investigation being unhappily a crude, unmeasurable thing like a work of literature, the formulation is generally sociological or anthropological in reference, though the language may be drawn from any one of the exact sciences. For example, note how a critic validates the simple, empirical observation that he is bored by repetitiousness: "The repetitiousness with which the boy has evil thoughts and then feels contrite cannot help being monotonous since these incidents do not exfoliate anywhere except in local metaphor."18 Obviously the critic wanted to ground in a general law his own reaction of boredom to a repetition which another critic might have regarded as repetition for emphasis, or adroit repetition with variation—in which case, interest, not boredom, would have had to be given some kind of objective cause or general existence. In the given sentence the critic first introduces the notion of a statistically verifiable, though still appirical, observation, which is then given greater authority by the suggestion of biological law included in the word exfoliate, a technical term for a natural process.19 The result is to suggest that there is more to this critical observation than just impressionistic or appreciative yawping.

This effort to make criticism objective or scientific will explain the plain tone and borrowings from scientific vocabulary, but not, of course, the peculiar idiom and melodramatic undertone of modern criticism. Here, for example, is a critic commenting on two lines from "The Dry Salvages":

> The salt is on the briar rose, The fog is in the fir trees.

The two together make an image, and in their pairing reveal, by self-symbol declare, by verse and position unite, two halves of a tragic gesture.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Richard Chase, "Sense and Sensibility," Kenyon Review, XIII (Autumn, 1951), 689.

19 Since the word means "slough, peel, or flake off," I find the statement on the whole quite baffling. I do not see how anything could flake off into anything, except perhaps a tub. Does the sentence mean that the incidents do not develop (assuming that exfoliate has somehow been confused with foliage so as to mean "break into leaf") into anything except local metaphors—whatever they are? No doubt local is some kind of metaphor (national? universal? general?) used to give a sort of physical reality to metaphors.

<sup>20</sup> Blackmur, "Lord Tennyson's Scissors," 2.

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The simplest explanation might be that this critic just happened to like the sentence structure of Gerard Manley Hopkins. But I think that more is involved, and so I come back to my first proposition, that the style of modern critics has developed as it has because the critics are not in fact talking about books or about their direct experiences with books, but rather about secondary experiences or attitudes, which exist for the most part quite independently of the books which are supposed to demand them.

#### III

In the first place, these people are always talking about being critics, a job of enormous complexity and intense significance no less than "the job of the schoolmaster," teaching "a generation how to read that has been taught that literature is anything but what it is." The job, they say, is a difficult one, "which cannot be done with Arnold's or Pater's language,"21 for literature, or what they see as its content, is intractable; it can be said to make fierce and impossible demands on metaphor and myth, to assault the sensibility, "either investing it or sacking it"; 22 it is constructed of images, which (in contrast to ideas or conceptions) are natural or wild and obey their own laws, being "things as they are in their rich and contingent materiality," arrayed in "their panoply of circumstance and with their morning freshness upon them." And there is a terrible struggle of the image to protect itself against the Platonism in all men, even poets—a Platonism "which is militant, always sciencing and devouring," trying to take the image captive, to beat it into submission, deprive it of its original state of freedom, and turn it into mere idea. The struggle is joined -weakly, it would seem-by man's "starved inhibited aspiration towards innocence which, if it could only be free, would like to respect and know the object as it might of its own accord reveal itself."23 If this sort of thing should be taken seriously, it would go far to prove both M. Lévy-Bruhl's contentions about the primitive

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Eliseo Vivas, "Criticism and the Little Mags," Western Review, XVI (Autumn, 1951), 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Chase, "Sense and Sensibility," 688; Blackmur, "Lord Tennyson's Scissors," 6.

<sup>23</sup> Ransom, op. cit., pp. 115, 116, 130.

mind and the theories of a mythopoeic age that Cassirer and Mrs. Langer have derived from them. Or at least if there's all this mana in the content (or is it the form?) of literature, it's easy to see how, if not why, the critic soon becomes not only schoolmaster but also priest.

From the strict point of view of literary criticism it must be insisted that the miraculism which produces the humblest conceit is the same miraculism which supplies to religions their substantive content. (This is said to assert the dignity not of the conceits but of the religions.) It is the poet and nobody else who gives to the God a nature, a form, faculties, and a history. . . . The myths are conceits born of metaphors. . . . Religion depends for its ontological validity upon a literary understanding, and that is why it is frequently misunderstood.<sup>24</sup>

From this point of view—I do not know why it is especially "strict"—discussion of literature becomes an act of supreme importance, the reiterated holy moment of a consecration.

I cannot pretend to examine here Dante's double imagery in all its detail, for Dante's light alone could lead us into complexities as rich as life itself. I had almost said richer than life, if by life we mean (as we must mean) what we ourselves are able daily to see, or even what certain writers have seen, with the exception of Shakespeare, and possibly of Sophocles and Henry James.<sup>26</sup>

And it is just because the moment and the act are holy that the language becomes, in a strict sense, hieratic.<sup>27</sup> Modern critics place

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 140.

<sup>25</sup> Allen Tate, "Yeats's Romanticism: Notes and Suggestions," Southern Review, VII (1942), 591.

<sup>26</sup> Tate, "The Symbolic Imagination: A Meditation on Dante's Three Mirrors," Kenyon Review, XIV (Spring, 1952), 256-7.

<sup>27</sup> The critics sometimes talk as if something had happened to the modern mind to prevent most of us from understanding them. For example:

<sup>&</sup>quot;The symbolic imagination takes rise from a definite limitation of human rationality

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a value on criticism greater even than that announced for it by Arnold, the great Victorian (and therefore unacknowledged) source for this aspect of modern critical thought.

Modern critics are perhaps also a little like Arnold in never quite keeping their attention on the poem (as a poem), but instead always drifting off into attacks on the eighteenth century, because it was rationalistic; or the nineteenth century, because it was optimistic; or the Renaissance, because it forgot the medieval heritage; or Protesportism, because it isn't at least Anglo-Catholicism; or the American liberal mind, because "it has no idea of its own momentousness or of its own tragic career," lacks the "rich extension" of the myth of the Fall of Man and "the symbolic polarities of light and dark, space and time, father and son, which derive from it," and isn't doing enough to discover the true sources in the American past of "our new liberalism of the nineteen-forties-of which in political theory Mr. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., is the most brilliant spokesman."28 "I would not," one critic announces, "for a minute pretend solidarity with men who do not realize that one of the essential marks of decency today is to be ashamed of being a man of the twentieth century."29 And a couple of others ask their readers to accept the statement, "In many respects, the elaboration of Biblical teaching developed in the thirteenth century schools was history's most significant intellectual achievement."30

Sometimes it seems to be only a lack of manners that separates

which was recognized in the West until the 17th Century; in this view the intellect cannot have direct knowledge of essences."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Catholic poets have lost, along with their heretical friends, the power to start with the 'common thing'; they have lost the gift for concrete expression. The abstraction of the modern mind has obscured their way into the natural order."

I do not know whether these two sentences refer to the same thing, but when "symbolic imagination" is defined as bringing "together various meanings at a single moment of action," I have to conclude that the thing in question is pretty much equivalent to Coleridge's "secondary imagination," and that the poetic phenomenon it produces is probably the same one he was pointing to in the famous passages on *Venus and Adonis*. The sentences are from Tate, "The Symbolic Imagination," 260, 261-2.

<sup>28</sup> Chase, "Melville's Confidence Man," 138, 139.

<sup>29</sup> Eliseo Vivas, in the Preface to his *The Moral and the Ethical Life* (Chicago, 1951), quoted by Hyatt Howe Waggoner in *Western Review*, XVI (Autumn, 1951), 92.

<sup>30</sup> D. W. Robertson, Jr., and Bernard Huppé, Piers Plowman and Scriptural Tradition (Princeton, 1951), p. 235.

this "most distracted of all eras since the collapse of the Roman Empire"<sup>31</sup> from the great ages of history:

They [one of the important critical groups] understood the language of one another, and by language I mean the primary ways in which we think about Religion, the people with whom we live, and about the relation of the individual to the state. . . . They did not, for example, write in wry amazement to their parents back home when they heard a student say "Yes, Ma'am" to an older lady, saw him remove his hat when any lady entered an elevator, or bounce out of his seat and bow slightly when he noticed any person considerably older than himself standing up in a street car. No ice had to be broken on questions of fundamental good breeding, which is perhaps the first and simplest way through which people come to comprehend one another.<sup>32</sup>

At other times the decay is seen as all-pervasive, reaching from Teachers College to the Civil War and on to the mind of man itself:

—the technology of the North (with its epiphenomenal art and belles lettres) was built on the most destructive aberration of the Western mind—autonomous dialectics and ontological nominalism. The fact of the matter is that one phase of the Civil War is being fought over again in the North today. President Hutchins is merely the most vociferous member of a large party which is embattled against the dialectics and educational technology of John Dewey and Sidney Hook.<sup>33</sup>

The most extraordinary example that I know of this worship of the Spirit of Times Past is one in which the critic first quotes a letter of St. Catherine of Siena, in which she describes how she gave spiritual comfort to a young prisoner condemned to beheading. At the block she extended his neck, and when the blade had fallen, she caught the severed head: "When he was at rest my soul rested in peace and quiet, and in so great fragrance of blood that I could not bear to remove the blood which had fallen on me from him." And the critic remarks, "St. Catherine had the courage of genius which permitted her to *smell* the Blood of Christ in Niccolo Tuldo's blood clotted on her dress: she smelled the two

<sup>31</sup> Richmond C. Beatty, "Donald Davidson as Fugitive-agrarian," Hopkins Review, V (Winter, 1952), 13.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>33</sup> Herbert Marshall McLuhan, "The Southern Quality," A Southern Vanguard, p. 112.

### SOULS AMONG MASTERPIECES

bloods not alternately but at one instant, in a single act compounded of spiritual insight and physical perception."<sup>34</sup> (The italics are the critic's.)

There was a moment when "the Hellenic race was marked off from the barbarian, as more intelligent and more emancipated from silly nonsense," said Herodotus. And though by temperament and training I am quite unadjusted to the sort of scrubby ecstasy apparently felt by this critic when he discovered St. Catherine's letter, I can see that this passage has some importance as marking a climax in the long, dark and fairly dismal drama that modern critics are always writing about. For it is that drama and this kind of spiritual insight that finally explain the pervading tone of modern critical style. The critics have inflated their language and turned their business into melodrama in order to give importance to an otherwise inconsequential occupation. They have developed a woolly cant so as to communicate with the other participants in the mystery, and an inhumane jargon to get at the objectivity of science, while all the time asserting their peremptory claim to a grander knowledge. Their tone, though—the portentous imitation-mysticism, the blood-and-thunder language of sin and salvation, the conviction of being among the elect—these they have made up as they follow along the glory trail, circuit riders of literature, revivalists of criticism, missionaries of a bleak and desperate back-country religion, whose tears wet the mourners' benches in a dozen critical reviews.

<sup>34</sup> Tate, "The Symbolic Imagination," 262-3.

## To a Quaker Lady

JON SWAN

I can not win thee, Friend, not thee With words, who sees adjacent, such Heaven as we enter death to see, Who in a silence hears as rich Conviction as a pulpit sings, Not thee with words I'll win.

But if in silence, harmony
With patience sit, or maybe pray,
Be such deep music and I'll be
Mute, providing but a key
That softer aspiration brings,
And with a song, begin.

O JON. SWAN has returned to this country to work with the American Friends Service Committee, after teaching with Paul Geheeb, German educator, in the École d'Humanité in Switzerland. This is among his first published poems.

## Alaskan Summer

## Leaves from a Candid Journal

## F. FRASER DARLING

June 1,1952. We have left the Olympics and the Cascades behind and the busyness of the straits of water between Seattle and Vancouver, the weather has faded out the landscape and we just sit for hours in the DC4, five abreast, waiting to reach Alaska down there where the sun isn't shining. My stomach tells me we are descending, the sun goes as we bump into the clouds—oh misery—and then a rift discloses a mountainous landscape of the kind I know well, for here are the West Highlands of Scotland all over again, acid rocks, an acid vegetation, the drowned coastline and not only the evidence of glaciation but glaciers as well.

We crocodile out of the plane at Juneau and look around. It is the same forlorn scene as if I were looking across from Ballachulish to Kingairloch. The rain is the same, the temperature is the same, the latitude is almost the same, and doubtless many of the problems of Juneau as a human habitat are the same.

Thirteen miles into Juneau, passing a tidal grass flat where 20 or 30 Guernsey cows are grazing. They look better than most cows I have seen stateside, and the good Swedish barn expresses a confidence in the future. My colleague Starker Leopold and I share a room at the Baranov, \$10. It is an excellent hotel, and I marvel to myself as ever at the American capacity to do things well in out-of-the-way places.

© F. FRASER DARLING is a British author and ecologist. He was a Rockefeller Special Research Fellow in 1950, and is a member of the Scientific Advisory Council of the Conservation Foundation. It was on behalf of the latter body that he visited Alaska in 1952 with Dr. A. Starker Leopold to make an appraisal of the wild-life situation. These notes are excerpted from the diary which Dr. Darling kept at that time.

We stroll downtown to get some late lunch and go into a dive complete with soda fountain and juke box. Good choice of food and a cheerful woman serving it; our change in silver dollars. Sunday being a day we could have to ourselves, Starker and I walk uphill into the forests of Sitka spruce and hemlock. My education in Alaska had begun. Here was a coniferous forest as it should be, not sterile-floored and black-dark like a spruce plantation in Britain, but a place of beauty and grace, softened by a rich shrub and field layer—a branching *Vaccinium* new to me, a rose-colored *Rubus* and a wild strawberry. Beauty and ecological repose are one.

The birds are new, but Starker knows them—the varied thrush, chestnut-breasted and black-collared; the blue grouse booming in the great spruces; and a lovely little warbler newly come, greenish with black head and eye-stripe. Life was good once more and seemed to be continuing from last Sunday afternoon when I had had tea at home 7,500 miles away in an old English rectory garden where the nightingale sang as if to wish me Godspeed. But now there was no sun and we had climbed to the snowline.

June 3. Chichagoff Island today. We flew in yesterday and joined the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service patrol ship Grizzly Bear, and have cruised round these forested coasts, going ashore from time to time. What wealth this forest is! Alaska, as America's last frontier, is in an interesting situation. The philosophy and practice of conservation are practical politics now, and Alaska has the chance no other new country has had, to put conservation into practice before the catastrophes of exploitation. Everywhere else the idea has come afterwards and the journey back is long and hard. There are plenty of people itching to get their claws into these southeast Alaskan forests, but the federal government is doing a fine job of holding tight, and where a logging concession is being made, as down at Ketchikan, the contract is being tied up on conservation principles so that the forest shall be a continuing resource.

Cribbage is Alaska's card game. Yes, I have played it; taught by my grandfather, but a long time ago. All right, I succumb to the engineer-cook-steward's persuasion, and take three games off him.

#### ALASKAN SUMMER

Aha! we've heard of that British capacity for understatement. Not at all; I was brought up to being dealt five cards, throwing out two to the crib. Here you are dealt six cards and keep four to play with. It makes it too easy.

We put in at a little shack and a smokehouse near a salmon trap: "Burns is the name, Richard Burns, born in Georgia," says the old bachelor. "If you guys like to go over there and see a Canada goose's nest by an otter's den, I'll get my teeth in so's I can talk to you, and I'll pick you some young rhubarb." The cairn of rocks near the goose's nest was an otter town and must have held a dozen of these playful creatures, evidently to the delight of the gentle Mr. Burns.

The old man was picking red sweet stalks of rhubarb about as thick as a pencil. "I'm not really a fisherman, but I'm watchin' and figgerin' it out. Guys around here don't tell you much and I have to learn my own way. If I'm doin' sump'n and I sees a fella smilin', I knows I'm doin' it wrong someways, so I watches out on that pretty doggone careful next time."

June 7. In Anchorage after 800 miles through clouds and rain. Cleared a little as we came down low to fly across the Copper River flats, which are miles and miles of gravel braided by innumerable channels of the river. I was going to say it was desolation, but not so, for down there was a mother bear and her two cubs scooping salmon out of the water—salmon, the main export of Alaska to the value of a hundred million dollars.

A double room has been booked for us at a first-class hotel, \$14 a night. We are in a boom town of nearly 30,000 people pressing into accommodation fit for about half that number. Yet the town spreads its unsightly squalor over many miles of country, shacks, hovels and super-apartment buildings. There is a hurdy-gurdy below our window, blaring Strauss waltzes far into the night. The town is full of hard-faced types talking contracts and dollars, and the dust is frightful. Everywhere is gravel and huge earth-moving machines and the air weeps dust. No rain here and what a lovely country! If you get out of the dust the air is fragrant with the open-

ing balsam poplar, trichocarpa. But round any corner you may be invited into Alf's Place or Dinning Rooms (how true, for the juke box penetrates as far as the dust).

June 8. A 20-mile walk today up the Eagle River which flows down a great glacial valley covered in woods of balsam poplar, birch, willow, aspen and black spruce in the muskeg. The moose are numerous and obviously overbrowsing the willow. Predatory animals are being killed out and the Eagle River valley is closed to moose shooting. The two notions don't add up.

June 10. A day of days in the life of a naturalist. The sun was bright at 3.0 o'clock this morning in McKinley Park, at almost Latitude 64°N. We motored far into the Park, reaching an altitude of 4,100 feet on Sable Pass. Here the mountains were yellow, with harlequin snowfields, an entirely new landscape for me; yet holding a bird I knew well, the rock ptarmigan, sitting white on the snow, its crimson eye-ceres like little flowers.

How often have I wished to see the Highlands of Scotland as they were 10,000 years ago, a relatively short time after their emergence from the Quaternary ice! That vision has been granted now, with the ptarmigan before me on the snow as a sweet and living link in time and space. I look across the Toklat River and see a flat expanse of gravel two miles wide between the mountains. Here was a highland strath of 10,000 years ago, waiting for its capping layer of finer alluvium before the grass and trees could flourish. And the higher winter temperature, of course. That too will come in its own time and then Alaska will be ready for Western civilized man. At the moment she is too new and cannot stand the wear which man given to aggregation is attempting to put upon her. Alaska is too tender yet.

The mother grizzly bear with her two cubs playing in a snowfield make sheer delight; a big lump and two little lumps, but in movement how supple and fluid. The mother sees us but does not bother. Then the cubs see us but have no innocent lack of fear. Instead, they scuttle to the lee of the vast bulk of their mother. What now?

#### ALASKAN SUMMER

The seconds tick by and four little ears appear above the back of Mama, four little eyes and two little noses. We are under observation from the age-old safety of the maternal skirt.

The caribou beginning to move across the Park help to dispel the illusion of linear time from my mind. We have lost them at home these thousand years and all we can do is raise in wonder a blackened antler from the bog.

Since long before Alaska was reality to me, I had longed to see the white Dall sheep. Its cousin the Bighorn was familiar already, but the whiteness which is not albinism has its own beauty. Expectancy did not prepare me for what I saw in that first flock of ewes and lambs. These were sheep in the heroic mould. Their faces were gentle but not sentimentally silly as in so many domesticated breeds. Each step they took was beautiful to watch, their muscles showing and not hidden by wool or fat. Later I was close to some full-grown rams and felt that the Dall sheep were indeed sheep in the ideal of the philosopher, occupying the niche to which they have evolved, the hard, high ground of short, sparse herbage. (That habitat is not unlimited in Alaska, and as I traveled over so much of the country in the four months I was in the Territory, I felt that any great increase in numbers could neither be expected nor was to be desired. Wild sheep, like any others, do best when they are not stocking their range to capacity. It is almost certain that the high numbers of the 1920's took their natural consequence in the crash of the early 1930's.)

The humbler members of this great fauna of the Park took up much of our time. Who can stay a smile at the busy, hay-making pika? Then a small porcupine walked across the gravel near tufts of withered grass and as he moved, and the wind moved the stalks of the grass, you saw how like were the grass and the little northern porcupine.

June 15. We are free of the nightmare environment of Anchorage and have flown through Rainey Pass and down the Kuskokwim River to Bethel. The railway from Seward to Fairbanks, and latterly the Alaska Highway, have taken away the former importance of the

great rivers of Alaska as highways. Bethel doubtless had a reason for being there when the Kuskokwim was the road. Now, there would seem to be none, but Bethel goes on, a collection of poor shacks on piles to keep them out of the water—for the river floods the site after the breakup—two or three stores, a hospital, and an air strip over the river. You can't say Bethel has been left high and dry in the march of progress; rather has it been left behind in a slough of despond, with a tuberculosis rate around 30 per cent of the native population. The heaps of empty cans on vacant lots apparently have prestige value for those who sling their refuse on these cairns of the new age. The squalor of Anchorage is short-term and there is determination to overcome it, but in Bethel it is normality, past, present and future. Point Four could start right here.

I got out of the village after a few boss shots, for the swamp is so close about, and got on to the wide tundra northwards where, a couple of miles from Bethel, I found a little knoll quite two feet higher than the rest. There I sat in the evening sunshine enjoying the sweet air. The terrain was as much like the great northern bog of the Outer Hebrides as anything I could imagine, except that on this knoll there was a willow bush three feet high and a dwarf birch a foot or so. The sheep of the Outer Hebrides would never have left such succulence unbrowsed. The pipits sang their little song like our pipits, and there was the long-spurred lark trilling also. I heard a willow ptarmigan in the distance calling as do our red grouse, and a snipe drummed high above. His drumming is a little higher pitched than ours, but his chick-chacking when he comes to earth is just the same.

We spent the night in a shack kept by a half-breed. His wife sold ice cream and fizzy soft drinks and played the juke box. There was nothing wrong with the *spirit* of their hospitality and because of that I would have smiled through a lot worse, and our night's doss was only \$2.50 apiece.

Next morning as we were about to fly off the river in the Fish & Wildlife Widgeon, a young half-breed came to the water's edge to talk to me; a fine clean-cut youth he was, whose farthest journey in his life had been to Anchorage. He had a good, eager intelligence;

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"I read and read," he said, "but I can't get it all sorted out."

"Tell me about your Queen. How is she different from President Truman?"

I tried to explain the principles of monarchy as we understood it, spiritually and constitutionally. The passage of royal blood through 1,500 years impressed him.

Next the socialized medicine: would our new government throw it out? I told him it was accepted in principle by all parties and would certainly not be thrown out, though there could well be modification.

"We have bits of it here among the natives of Alaska, but it doesn't get to the root of the trouble. What's the good of hospitals if you leave folk living in these conditions?"

He pointed to three separate shacks. "In each of those there's someone about to keel over from tuberculosis."

I was sorry to leave that boy.

Two hours' flying from Bethel and we are watching the ice floes on the Kashunuk River, which leads to the Bering Sea. Dave Spencer, pilot-biologist, is completely unhurried as he looks down wondering where he can make it. We are in an area of low tundra as big as mainland Scotland, empty of men except for a very few Eskimo families. This immensity of flatness is something new to me, but more dramatic still are the thousands of geese here for the nesting. The day and night are never quiet for their cacophonies emperors, cacklers, whitefronts and brants. This is one of the great goose nurseries of the world, unknown till the Fish & Wildlife Service found it a few years ago. The geese are not all, for there are trillions, almost, of phalaropes, sandpipers, turnstones and other waders. And the sandhill cranes, the flight, call and behavior of which exercise a strange fascination. (Three months later, at Big Delta in the interior, I saw 300 of them as a flock ready to migrate. They rose higher and higher till the sun shone golden on their undersides; then they took up a treble V formation and flew away southeastwards.) I saw two Arctic hares here, about as big as a gazelle and probably faster.

June 20. We flew from the Kashunuk River tundra across part of the Bering Sea to Nunivak Island yesterday. Here are 1,200 square miles of dry basaltic tundra carrying a population of 225 Eskimos, 4,000 reindeer and 75 musk oxen. Administration is a credit to the United States and the Alaskan Native Service. The main "industry" is the reindeer herd, the increase of which is slaughtered, processed and frozen in a most modern corral and handling plant. The resident engineer-cum-administrator was Fred —how different from the notion of a British Colonial Service native commissioner, but Fred had what it takes for the job. You could see how the folk trusted him, and the children adored him. Fred was a fine man, from whom you could get reliable knowledge on archaeology and folklore, who could get the most out of a work team, who would never spare himself. The United States might well pick out its Freds, if Nunivak is to be the pattern of native administration, whether Eskimo or Indian, in Alaska or Arizona.

The Eskimo has emerged from the Stone Age as a superb craftsman. Here on Nunivak you can examine an everyday sealing outfit on the tiny bone-runnered sledge which is carried on the front of the kayak; you can look closely at the construction of the kayak, for the beautiful frames are at this season stripped of skin and set up on stands, and you can turn over in your hands some pieces of ivory carving as sweet to the touch as a Chinese jade. The Eskimo's hands can take hold intelligently of 20th-century engineering, and in the Arctic there are Eskimo foremen responsible for hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of Diesel equipment, doing a fine job. Nunivak Islanders get immense sport out of buying the highestpowered outboard engine and fitting it to the lightest, slimmest dory that would float if you wiped it underneath with a damp sponge. There are two speeds, all-out and stop, and as the outfit hydroplanes over the water at high speed, the Eskimo smiles happily.

The reindeer situation on Nunivak is a microcosm of what has happened all over western Alaska. Carrying capacity of the range was misjudged and techniques were not advanced enough to see that the deer were eating themselves out while yet increasing their

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numbers. That is one of the tragedies of pastoralism the world over: deterioration of the range and the condition of the animals do not keep in phase; then suddenly the herds crash. Wolves and poachers, sometimes where they do not exist, are blamed rather than the plain fact of a beaten-up range. There is no lichen range left on Nunivak, so a very much reduced herd must continue to live on dwarf willows and sedges.

June 25. We flew over Bristol Bay on the first day of the salmon fishing season. There must have been a thousand boats down there, large and small, and as we learned later, they trailed 87 miles of drift net of 8½-inch mesh. We had also flown over a large forest fire north of Dillingham; how shocking it is from above! Wildfire is one of the curses of Alaska and has taken its course over 80 per cent of forested land since the white man went in. Wildfire empties a country of caribou quicker than the rifle, for the lichen goes; but fire favors willow growth, which is moose feed.

June 28. Grounded at King Salmon, which is the administrative nerve-center of the fishing. The Fish & Wildlife salmon-fisheries men are troubled. The fish are not going up the rivers to seed the spawning beds, and it is probable those 87 miles of net are catching pretty well the whole run. Dave Spencer has flown the rivers to see if the fish were coming, but no. The Fish & Wildlife men are getting jumpy. (We learned later that the Service stopped all fishing for two or three days—during which time the air went blue!—and a good run of fish got into the rivers, ensuring the future generation.) This most valuable natural resource is down to half what it was in fish; only the increased price has kept up the value. Conservation research is going full blast and is yielding excellent results, but as one wise guy insists, "We don't want research; we want fish." So it isn't dead easy for the Fish & Wildlife Service.

June 30. Kenai, an old Russian settlement: a man calls to ask if we will come and help search for a two-year-old child who has strayed from a homesteader's tent in the forest. Dave, Starker and I drive

7 miles on a brand-new gravel road. At the very end of this is a pathetic bundle of household chattels, and back in the forest is a tent round which the man and his wife had been clearing when the baby girl had disappeared. The Marshal of Kenai gets out of another car, armed and wide-hatted. A beet-faced drunk falls out of a third car and calls for some method in the search. He rolls away unmethodically. Fifty men appear from nowhere, it seems, and the Marshal strings us into a line well over half a mile long, and we are to sweep round the locus of the tent. It is a bit of a job getting all these rugged individualists working together, but we go ahead through dense, wet undergrowth. After getting round perhaps 10° of our circle we come to a trail and halt to re-form our line. Then just as we are about to start again (I am nearer the peripheral end of the line) there is a shout at the extreme end, "We've got her," and 300 yards to my left I see a child in a man's arms. She is upright, so I know she is alive. She had got almost a mile into the forest in two hours. We wave handkerchiefs to two small airplanes and they wobble to show they understand. And now an ugly little man with 10 days of a beard walks up with the child. He is her father. But the child is of extraordinary beauty—large brown eyes, fine features, very small. Blissfully ignorant, abjectly clad, she smiles happily, talks in her own way and pokes an exquisite finger into that beard. The little runt himself is in ecstasy, seeing nothing, saying nothing, just striding ahead. This surely is his moment of beauty, for he found her. Bearded sourdoughs, cheechakos, construction men, engineers, bums and biologists come near, their faces all silly.

"Well, Goddammit miss if you haven't started soon enough going away from home! What the hell you'll be doin' at 17 damned if I know," and such pleasantries. The princess' court and its outriders proceed, till a bedraggled woman comes along, crying hysterically. Her relief is uncontrolled as she reaches the child. The retinue of 50-100 men suddenly becomes a group of individualists who happened to be walking that way. Those behind the family walk by as if it did not exist. It must be left alone in its moment of reunion. When we get back to the hub of operations, there is the little pile

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of things in the rain and that awful poke of a tent which must be these poor folks' home till they build their cabin. They are homesteaders; the Lord have mercy on them. The Marshal and two or three other braves with rifles stand by the bedding, point their guns into the air and fire six rounds to call in the stragglers. The hunt is done.

July 4. Manifestations of the blessings of this day in Kenai have been restricted to sporadic explosions of fireworks and slightly heavier boozing than usual. I spend the day reading in Dave's and the Marshal's library. There is a lot of thrilling stuff about Alaska from the days of early possession by the United States when many eager men went forth to explore. This period continued till the advent of the airplane and bush flying, since when little has been hidden, though it is far from being understood. That is the present phase of exploration here, trying to understand. It is impossible not to get excited about what there is to be done.

July 16. I take my picture of the sun shining on the pack ice at midnight, Point Barrow. Suppose every greenhorn does that. A 6-foot high cone of chopped-up freshly killed walruses is not pretty. The indignity seems greater than when a carcass is skinned and slung on a spandrel, for there is not the repose of individual death. As leads appear in the pack, the Eskimos are going forth in their umiaks to the walrus hunting. The whole of the walrus is used some way or other, but the quarry is so large and strong in life that the hunting tends to be wasteful. Many dead and wounded animals sink before they can be secured.

July 31. In the Romanzoff Mountains: this is one of the remotest spots on earth, at the northeast end of the Brooks Range, yet we have a large tent and have had cornflakes and fruit juice for breakfast. I cannot get any notion that we are exploring. The airplane is the key to Alaska and is a most romantic thing in what it achieves here, but it destroys much of the earlier romance of travel. We have flown here from Umiat on the Colville River and have come

through vast areas of spiry mountains and undulating Arctic prairie, sometimes feeling we could touch the Dall sheep as we passed them on a mountain side, and being thrilled by the close-massed herds of caribou grazing the glacial valleys or moving toward the Arctic Ocean. These few weeks in the Arctic are the climax of our journey, and for me the Arctic third of Alaska is the best. Perhaps this is because it is the least touched by Western man and therefore the least spoiled. It is an eternal regret to me that there are so few places on earth where man improves on nature. Civilizing man as an ecological-climax breaker almost makes civilization a contradiction in terms. This is the ecologist's and the conservationist's biggest job, to remove the contradiction; how can we civilize without laying waste the planet? Not only has the answer to be found, but we have a big loan to pay back to the planet which has subsidized our existence since the dawn of civilization. We have not lived on the earth's free income, but on her accumulated capital, and she is beginning to complain.

Here in Lake Peters, a glacier-water lake at 2,900 feet, from which the ice went only 10 days ago, there are lake trout or char weighing up to 22 pounds. These monsters are swallowing mere 3-pounders whole. We are eating the monsters.

August 21. Wainwright: have flown here from Kotzebue and Cape Lisburne today. The Cape is a quite horrific limestone headland which juts into the Chukchi Sea opposite Siberia. There was a 40-mile-an-hour wind and the temperature at freezing. But the sun shines here at Wainwright and the wind is only a strong breeze. As we come to rest on the beach, a horde of brown, solemn faces are at the windows of the little airplane, gazing awestruck at an Englishman in extremis. They recover their smiles as rapidly as he does his peristaltic equilibrium.

Wainwright is a small Eskimo village set in a great expanse of low, flat tundra. The small modern school is in the charge of a young couple from New York State devoted to their job, the sort who will give of their utmost from idealism and who have taken the trouble to get an anthropological training. The impression I have brought

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away from their little house is of springtime growth and flowers. How was it done? Uncle Sam, be kind to them.

Counted 84 snowy owls on the trip of 100 miles to Barrow. They sit on the ridges of the frost polygons, visible for miles on the tundra. Many of them have not bred this year because the snow did not melt soon enough to lay bare the harvest of lemmings on which they feed.

September 12. Receiving the academic hospitality of the University of Alaska at Fairbanks. I am happy here in the eagerness of young folk. Some things are still raw, but the specialist graduate schools are second to none. I liken this place to a Renaissance university: so many of us are poor, God knows where many of us sleep, individuality is almost percussive, and the élan is something older institutions have lost, I think. Here it sweeps you forward in its enthusiasm.

The fine, dry, clear atmosphere of the interior, playing on the fading foliage of the woods, makes the fall a lyrical time. Could time stand still on these days! In another month I shall be back in the old rectory garden, the nightingale gone and only the robin singing.

### Advice to the Lost

### HANNAH KAHN

First take sound, as frail as a feather and turn it round till it forms a ball then toss it far toward slanted weather and see it stopped by a hard stone wall.

Then take light, as vivid as motion and follow it farther than you can go until you stand bewildered with tension knowing there's nothing left to know.

And after the light and the sound have stalled you walk down black to the rim of where nothing is named, nothing has failed you, walk down black to the lighted stair.

The poetry of HANNAH KAHN has appeared in The Survey, Saturday Review, The American Mercury and Twice-A-Year.

# The Loud-Voiced Victory

### DAVID CORT

If it has been said before, we cannot be reminded too often that our Bill of Rights is essentially aristocratic. It was written by aristocrats and makes a new sort of aristocrat out of every man, woman and child living under its protection. Those first ten amendments, in a series of negations, describe a citizen of dignity and substance who specifically owns a home and carries a gun, who does not choose to be pushed or crowded, who thinks and reads and worships independently and who dares to outlaw secret charges and secret witnesses against himself. He's quite a man. The portrait is as sharp and explicit as a Gilbert Stuart painting.

It was a historical novelty of the most awesome kind that the aristocrats who claimed these rights extended them to the whole people—because they were magnanimous men or because they saw a vision of a better world on earth.

At any rate, we Americans now own these aristocratic rights and have at least the aristocratic responsibility of trying to keep them. We might even try to extend them to the enslaved and hopeless the world over. In any event, it must be recognized that aristocratic rights are always in danger; indeed, history is not much more than a recital of the decay and cancellation of aristocracies, from the wars of the Guelphs and Ghibellines to the American Civil War and two World Wars.

Hardly anyone now dares to speak openly against the Bill of Rights; but these rights are the secret target, and usually the first victim, of the open and hidden enemies of democracy. Clothed in them, the commonest man is terrifying to the tyrant; stripped of them, he is transformed by an evil sorcery into a pumpkin.

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The threat to aristocratic rights such as these is latent in every society. It is something so simple as the advantage always enjoyed by children over indulgent adults, the ill-bred over the polite, the uncontrolled over the self-disciplined, the shameless over the proud, the crooked over the honest, and the neurotic over the sane. It is as pathetic and unanswerable as the person who says, "Look out, or I'll lose my temper." It is the child lost in a tantrum, the drunk who wants to fight. It is all the meaningless words, used only in a torrent of passion, that convey the hatred without reason or mind or inflection. It is the loud voice, or the barking dog.

In southern countries the loud voice seems to be well understood and thoroughly discounted. It is chiefly in the north that people are awed by it. When they hear that sound in the night, coarsened and guttural and sorrowful, they generally rush to call the police. When they use it themselves, they are first shocked and then, to justify it, emboldened to a further rise in pitch. Every policeman has seen this justifying after-rage, which, because it is guilty, can be more dangerous than the first tantrum.

The cultural effect of the loud voice seems to vary in inverse ratio to the average mean temperature. Everyone yells in the warm countries, even the aristocrats; and everyone adjusts his nervous system to the yelling of the others. In Latin America, southern France, Italy, Islam, India and the American South, the tantrum is almost an art form, and appreciated as such. It is not, therefore, very alarming to other southerners.

In the north, however, two dangerous things happen. The nervous systems of the bystanders begin to jangle; and, even more ominous, the screamer is convinced by the sound of his own voice. Lenin and Hitler even scared themselves a little. Stalin, on the other hand, was never excited by screaming, being himself a southerner from a country habituated to civil war and treachery. In this broad sense, he can be compared more properly to Mussolini than to Hitler (who was, however, a South German). These southern screamers who come north have the problem of adding a little thought content without losing the thrill of the scream. Hitler and Stalin succeeded in doing this; I would say that Senator McCarthy shows good promise.

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But who cannot recognize the loud voices in the world today? They are so numerous and widespread and spring from such varied environments that it is as if some mysterious signal had awakened them all, like the frog chorus in the spring. The loud voice is the Russian delegate in the United Nations. It is the voice of Hitler, now gratefully heard only in recordings. It is heard in Czechoslovakia and Poland and in Iran, Iraq and Egypt. It throbs like a blocked artery in the throats of the Chinese Communists who are lynching missionaries and the more industrious villagers. It came over the ridges of Korea, working itself into the rage requisite for death. Disguised as an answer to the others, but really obeying the same signal that awoke them, it is even heard in America, in McCarthy's fruity tenor, punctuated by the sop to the grownups, "I have here in my hand photostatic copies." The world over, it is as if the children, the boors and the unbalanced had simultaneously discovered the sovereign power of making a scene.

Generally, it may be observed that where people are making a mess of their lives, they are screaming. Where they are doing reasonably well, as in Turkey, Greece, Pakistan and the Philippines, they are industriously going about their business. This rule can be successfully applied also to the screaming individual.

Screaming, of course, is not always neurotic. There are times that require a scene, such as that of the American Revolution. But the voice is not loud then. In that very different tone of the Declaration of Independence, it speaks with gravity of "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind"; for this is no Hitler or McCarthy—it is a Jefferson. The hatred for the tyrant was far outweighed by the Founding Fathers' love for their god, their race, their land and their "sacred Honor"; they wished only to be cleansed of the continued necessity for hatred. The very tone tells us that what was afoot was something much more portentous than a tantrum.

And in this test for a net preponderance of hatred or of love, men and causes can be judged again today. Communism, fascism and McCarthyism share the same recognizable howl and grinding contempt and fear. On the other hand, the much-abused "men of good will" feel and express more love than hatred. Whatever their mistakes may have been, they are not generally those of hatred.

The patient indulgence that the adults give the loud voice may be defended in a psychiatrist or parent. But the surrender to this sort of blackmail in political life has in the past ushered in the death of aristocratic rights. The French and Russian Revolutions both began when the aristocrats began to sympathize with them. The reckless or unbalanced or sometimes timid ones joined the revolution, attracted by the prospect of going somewhere in a crowd.

This attraction is never really safety nor happiness, for it seems true that mankind never looks very hard for happiness. The objective seems to be to achieve that condition known to science as "polarized." A revolutionist whose positive end points toward a leader and whose negative end points at a villain (as toward the North and South Poles) finds life suddenly very simple. And of course the polarized man has no further need of the Bill of Rights.

One analogy between the first law of magnetism or polarization—that unlike poles attract and like poles repel—and those of revolution can be noted here: Communism was repelled by the liberal Socialist government of Kerensky and attracted the Tsarist officers who constituted three-quarters of the officers of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army. The bourgeois Fascist revolutions of Central Europe were repelled by the Jews, who had been the successful bourgeoisie. It is suggestive that the Chinese, who are the world's greatest merchants, are repelled by Western mercantilism.

These attractions and repulsions may not be evident to everyone. But the revolutionist can be sure of attracting the tolerance of one group he is sworn to destroy—the aristocrats, especially the more worldly, curious and unbalanced among them. The Duke of Orleans, Philippe Egalité—today he would be called Philippe Egghead—went over to the Revolution in 1789 with forty-six noblemen in the States-General.

But closer at hand, in the Romania of 1940, the aristocrats gave the indulgence of doting uncles to the ugly screaming of the Iron Guard. These half-baked hoodlums, a body of organized delinquents, were in fact the spawn of the Allied victory in World War I, which resulted in the breakup of some large estates, the increase of free education, and some industrialization. They were the

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dragon's teeth sown by the Fourteen Points. When Hitler's Western victory in 1940 put this Nazi-converted road company into the government, the aristocrats, who had the expected aristocratic opinion of the king and his mistress, went the way of Philippe Egghead in the French Revolution.

In her book on this episode, Athene Palace, the partly Americanized Countess Waldeck notes a distinguished Romanian princess who filled her salon with Iron Guard cousins and nephews. "The government must have a quick success," said the old lady with a fond look at her nephews, "or the revolution will become very, very bloody." Countess Waldeck quotes the Prussian officers and diplomats then in Bucharest as identifying themselves with this "revolutionary élan," "revolutionary vision" and the indubitable prosperity of revolution in general. At this period, Prussian generals had become so enraptured by the loud voice of the Nazi revolution that they even claimed that the Prussian officer corps had always been ascetic, anti-plutocratic, anti-libertarian, socialist and revolutionary. They were trying to make themselves identical with Hitler, but the attraction they felt was actually the magnetic one of unlike poles.

The author adds her own endorsement, "No smart revolutionary leader suppresses bloodshed until it rises to an evil and long-drawn-out crescendo [this was the point at which Philippe Egghead lost his head under the guillotine] but rather permits the revolution its night- or nights-of-the-long-knives in the beginning."

This is the delusion of the aristocratic aficionado of revolution: that a little murder will fill the revolution's belly, and that if heads must roll, better a few than many, better early than late; and to that end it is better to forget the aristocratic rules, but only for the moment. And then the aristocrats discover, as did Philippe, that it was not heads but rules that the revolution wanted.

Thus it might be said that Senator McCarthy was only after one head when he said in a campaign speech that he could make a good American out of Governor Stevenson with a club. The opponents of Governor Stevenson may have indulged this expression as a mere excess of "revolutionary élan."

On the other side of the world, some democrats said that it was not worth continuing the war in Korea for the sake of a few prisoners who said they did not want to be returned to the Communists, in the face of the Communist screams that these unimportant individuals must be returned.

One head or a few heads? No. One rule and then all the rules. It should be added that the Romanian aristocrats' tolerance of the loud voice came to a head in Bucharest in one of the more abominable massacres of the twentieth century—a Terror carried out by two hundred squads of six men each. But this is only the customary end of such indulgence.

However, even those who reject the loud voice of the revolutionist admit that it is usually victorious. The victories of Napoleon, Nazi Germany and the Communists are cited as examples. Aristocrats are often impressed by the energy and self-sacrifice of the unanimous and consanguineous group, all going some place together with the vision of their indomitable hatred held clearly before them.

A second and longer look at history, however, shows that the revolutionist is victorious, generally, on one condition—that he be victorious. It is too often forgotten that in 1941 the Communist high command scrapped the slogans of revolutionary bolshevism because they were totally ineffectual in defeat. When the chips were down, the loud voice no longer worked. Alone with his fear, a man who called on the mob slogans of communism found them useless trash in his soul. By the time of the battle of Moscow, the Red Army began to reorganize the morale program along different lines: love of Mother Russia, hatred of the Teuton enemy and fear of the commissioned officer. A year or so later, it began to work. A similar collapse was seen in Nazi morale a few years later.

Where the loud voice is not triumphant, a different process seems to operate. It is a property of democracy to fall apart when it is ahead, as it was in the 1920's and early 1930's. Democracies only begin to tighten and even grow formidable when they are losing, as in the Battle of Britain and after Pearl Harbor. It should be noted that this spirit is spreading and was seen in Korea in the feats of all

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the armed forces engaged, from the Turkish to the Philippine.

This may be taken as a dividend of the democracies' desire to extend the aristocratic Bill of Rights to everybody on earth; but their tendency to fall apart again in victory is to be read in every day's newspaper. The loud voice of the revolutionary has not ceased—perhaps it will never cease—to shock the adult, self-disciplined, proud, sane and aristocratic citizens toward the temptation of indulging it. Perhaps, they think, the new voice is a condition of continued existence; the young delinquents may be the government when they grow a little older; and of course the Philippe Eggheads are languidly convinced that the revolution is always the winning side.

It cannot be said that this applies to the United States at the present moment. Indeed, the loud voice of communism is almost equalized, but not quite, by the loud voice of its equivalent McCarthyism. The fact that the bedlam has been redoubled does very little to safeguard our aristocratic privileges, though some people may feel that the matter is being taken care of.

Today the loud voice in America is triumphant in only one quarter, and that, unfortunately, happens to be in an area most vital to our cultural life. The letters to the editors and the telegrams to legislators are a cultural force of which the majority of people are unaware, but they strongly condition the content of newspapers, magazines, television, radio, movies and government legislation. Some of these are intelligent, useful comments, the relics of an old-fashioned American tradition of public participation; a few of these even get printed. However, the great majority of letters are reflexes of partisan prejudice.

These hidden revolutions, about which the majority is never consulted, are directed at people such as editors and legislators, whose job it is to please, not to outrage. When the total of furious communications reaches a certain pitch, editorial policy is surrendered to the loud voices, not openly but imperceptibly. There is no published statement of the change, nor even placating answers to the correspondents, for large corporations rarely admit openly that they have been wrong.

Perhaps the editors should submit these issues openly to the readers and invite a full-scale vote; but it is probable that the vote would be won by the revolutionists, for the intelligent, well-balanced readers do not usually take pen in hand.

In one long decade on a widely circulated slick magazine, the writer never had the pleasure of seeing a large amount of appreciative mail come in following the appearance of a really fine piece of journalism. He frequently noticed that one or ten thousand communications responded to a single phrase in screaming outrage, often exactly repeating one another. In the first case, it should be pointed out that the more admiration and respect are felt by normal, busy people, the less likely they are to confide these delicate emotions to the United States mails. In the second case, it would seem obvious that the true revolutionist is at work. Often, paid propagandists stage-manage the scream of protest; less often, the single phrase outrages thousands of people independently and spontaneously.

But so far as I know, no American magazine has ever made a systematic effort to call on the writers of such letters and assemble the data to form a judgment on their sanity before accepting their criticisms. For these letter writers have become the dominant factor in American cultural life: each minority has enforced its taboos, and the total of taboos equals the innocuous uniformity of American magazines, radio and movies today. The loud voice speaks, and the aristocratic rights vanish one by one.

What life before the taboos was like came back to me with a rush when I opened an old family song book somewhat optimistically titled Songs That Never Grow Old. The taboos would have torn from it all the national anthems and most of the drinking songs, and rewritten the words of songs such as "Simon the Cellarer," "Dream Faces," "Be Kind to Thy Father," "The Vacant Chair," "My Last Cigar," "Over the Banister" and of course the one which goes:

My wife and I lived all alone, In a little log hut we called our own, She loved gin and I loved rum— I tell you what, we'd lots of fun.

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If I'd a cow that gave such milk, I'd clothe her in the finest silk, I'd feed her on the choicest hay, And milk her forty times a day.

Remember that this was a song book for use in the home. The editors rightly assumed that, although the hero of this song was obviously an alcoholic, my singing it at the age of eight would not make me an alcoholic. The entrancing quality of all these songs is that they reflect life directly, without editing by a psychiatrist who thinks I am a hopeless idiot.

Why have I been deprived of all this? The answer is that the idiots have taken command, and are taking care of one another. They come in the millions; for in any civilized society about five per cent of the adults are psychotic, not obviously or dangerously, but inherently. In America today, this would add up to about five million voices.

The only investigation I know of that has explored this huge cultural force was conducted by Hans Toch and Jacob Goldstein in regard to mail received by the United Nations Department of Public Information. In this exhaustive study are quoted some examples which, while touching our sympathy medically, should excite our consternation politically, for they speak in our midst with the very voice of Vishinsky and Hitler:

Nations have ignored Me and I shall perplex nations through famine, wars, and earthquakes, till they become humble before Me. The wisdom of the wise, their academic degrees and their researches in science shall not save them from My Wrath....

I have been telling the Nation's Leaders for the last eighteen years that world conditions will grow worse—till the final downfall of the world system comes....

Due to your UN Council not having proper guidance, a most awesome and terrible Bible Prophesy is about to become a reality involving total annihilation of the West World....

And so on. Most of these letters follow the line that Western civilization is doomed, that scientists and educated people generally are to blame, and that only an apocalyptic vision of one kind or an-

other can save the world. Doubtless, Whittaker Chambers is saner than these correspondents, but his message suffers from its being exactly this and no more. In America, of course, the loud voice must lower itself in public and masquerade as "typical reader" or "average voter." Whenever it is clearly identified as psychotic, neurotic, or a special group or prejudice, it is powerless.

For though the strength of a democracy is that it trusts its destiny to the expressed will of the majority, its weakness grows out of the mechanical difficulties of determining what is the will of the majority. A vote for McCarthy may mean any one of half a dozen overlapping or even contradictory things, and democracy has trouble sorting out just which is the sense of the meeting. A vote is a vote. For the ensuing two or four years it is cashed in at any value the recipient chooses to place on it. If he is very wrong in his valuation of the vote, he may lose some votes at the next testing. This is a crude trial-and-error system, but it is the best one we have worked out, and its most awful miscarriages are happier than the successes of other systems. A vote is a vote to an editor too; and it is too much trouble even to check letters against subscription lists, and impossible to measure the "typicalness" of the writer.

A clue as to how these letters come to be written was given in a syndicated woman's column this spring in which alcoholic lady readers were telling how they occupied their time while on the wagon. One reader wrote: "I spend all my spare time writing to the powers that be, giving them a feminine viewpoint. [Note that she is immersed in the typicalness of her own viewpoint.] I helped in the anti-vivisection fight for stray dogs, and now I'm hoping to rescue some of the so-called killer dogs in Vermont which may be shot on sight if caught wounding a deer."

This seemingly artless prattle must strike terror into any thoughtful, patriotic American. Compared to the writer of this letter, Chambers and McCarthy are obvious eccentrics without credentials or influence. By sharing her "feminine viewpoint" and helping to paralyze scientific research, she won her spurs in setting civilization back a few years or decades, insofar as she was able. Now she has rallied to the support of the fairly useless horde of pet dogs, whose

### THE LOUD-VOICED VICTORY

chief function is to distract the love of human beings away from other human beings.

It will be instructive to examine the equity and morality of her position in this matter. There are now in the United States something around four million white-tailed deer. The dogs are in the tens of millions and on the increase. To side with half-wild dogs is something like feeling pity for members of the Nazi S.S. brought to account for murdering Jews. I have no prejudice here; I like dogs and probably had distant kinsmen in the Schutzstaffel; but I must side with the victim against the assassin.

Suppose the "so-called killer dogs" were "wounding" me? Would she still be for the dogs? Suppose the white-tailed deer had gone berserk and were killing stray dogs; would she fly to the deer's defense? Certainly not. This correspondent has transposed an attachment for a given dog to all dogs under all conditions. What sense of logic or justice is to prevent her from transposing it to a person, to, for example, a Senator McCarthy, "just a boy, and such a thrilling voice"? She would think of Senator McCarthy leaping up at her lap, just as her lamented Doberman did in the long ago, and baying in that same moving and so marvelously senseless idiom. Strange, delicious feelings will pass over her in this fantasy, and she will agree that it is an outrage to criticize that sweet boy merely because he is "wounding" a few white-tailed deer, or the equivalent.

Actually the woman could not have examined the implications of her position so narrowly as I have done here. But subconsciously she shares the vice of Philippe Egghead and of protected people generally who can afford to sample the more luxurious edges of sensation. The one warmly remembered experience in this woman's life was evidently a dog—that is, a brute, a tamed animal that cannot help being a killer, a carnivore and, on occasion, a loud voice. Her emotions have been frivolously transposed to her politics, and her politics is effective because it is phrased in that genteel and Christian idiom, "Now I'm hoping to rescue some of the so-called killer dogs. . . ." They are always rescuing somebody, these ladies and McCarthys.

As for me, whenever they offer to rescue me, I cannot help re-

membering the Walrus and the Carpenter in the famous poem by Lewis Carroll. As one of the oysters, I cannot help fearing that when I have trotted down the beach a way, I will be eaten.

But I do not really believe at all in the loud-voiced victory. There may be times when the aristocratic rights flirt a little with the seductive brute, or politely defer, or timidly shrink; but I believe that they will finally assert themselves, even at the last minute, as when the Walrus said:

"Now, if you're ready, Oysters dear, We can begin to feed."

"But not on us!" the Oysters cried,
Turning a little blue.

"After such kindness, that would be
A dismal thing to do."

This was the oysters' last protest, but it was certainly rational and aristocratic. The vulgar American democrat must marvel at their silence as they were being swallowed by the Walrus and the Carpenter, suavely by the one and greedily by the other. A little uproar, one thinks, might at least have made the name of the oysters' beach immortal.

Americans are not the oysters in the poem. Here, the aristocratic rights are the property of ordinary people who are likely to spoil the rhyme by eating the Walrus and the Carpenter.

## The Cardinal Virtues

### An Un-Sabbath-Day Sermon

### MAX EASTMAN

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF CONFUCIUS, the great teachers of virtue have based their codes upon some supernatural belief. Buddha, to be sure was not a believer in God, but his notion that good deeds are rewarded and bad punished throughout an endless cycle of reincarnations was remote from matters of fact. Even Confucius, the least mystical of moralists, hinted that there was some counterpart in an impersonal "heaven" for the rules of good conduct which he thought should prevail on earth. And Plato, although his moral teaching was offered as valid for this world, could not forbear to reinforce it with a myth of rewards and punishments in the next. As for us moderns, we quite commonly associate virtue with piety, with otherworldliness, with concern for the immortal soul. And yet I venture to think that throughout history, if a test could be devised, the skeptics would be found to excel in simple goodness the true believers.

Coming of a tribe of Christian ministers, I have always felt the temptation to compose a sermon—I mean, earnestly to advocate good conduct. And I wonder whether it might not be done without any surviving trace of the notion that things are something else than what they are. The text might be from Horace, or Ecclesiastes, or from Robert Herrick: "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may." The theme would be that the most difficult virtues are essential to the rich experience of mortal life. They require no supernatural sanctions; they derive their authority from common sense and the method and results of science.

© MAX EASTMAN's first book, Enjoyment of Poetry, has become a classic. Of his subsequent twenty-three volumes, among the most significant are The Literary Mind, Enjoyment of Laughter and Marxism Is It Science? Mr. Eastman is currently at work on his political memoirs.

There are in the traditional view seven cardinal virtues: courage, prudence or mindfulness, temperance, and justice, according to the Greeks; and to these the Christians added faith, hope, and sympathy—or in their language, love. The list would be revised somewhat by a preacher who believed in matters of fact and scientific thinking, but it would not be abandoned.

Not a sparrow falls to the ground but proves that there is no Divine Providence, no Oneness of All Life. Every little bird is distinct and must take care of itself. Under these circumstances courage is absolutely necessary; it needs no heavenly argument. And physical courage is not enough, either. It does not make something of life, but only enables it to proceed. Moral courage, or boldness in asserting one's self, is just as important. Those who think they imitate Christ or the Buddha forget that Christ and the Buddha were not imitators. To imitate them is to abandon their high example.

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But courage itself may be a danger. Such courage as theirs may lead to the madhouse, if it is not disciplined by thinking. Presence of mind, as Plato and our English speech perceived, is the larger thing we want when we ask a man to be brave. Presence of mind should stand first when the talk is of morals, for it is only as mindful beings that we are subject to moral instruction at all. It should also come last, for when all the ideal principles have been learned, it remains to decide in each concrete situation which one is to be applied. Once the irreducible variety of the world is acknowledged, and is embraced as an opportunity, we can no longer live by any code. In every crisis we must think out what is good. Even pure impulse and abandon may at times be good, but only the thinking man knows when. Even a lie, in emergencies of small range, may have value, but all the consequences must be measured and known. For honesty flows also from presence of mind, if the mind in question has any scope. The cheat, the liar, the evader is in the long run cut off from the true delights not only of social communion, but of communion with himself—for what self has he left? He is cut off from reality almost as fatally as if he had not been born.

To be mindful of others is a little less obviously necessary than to be mindful of ourselves. It involves more effort, and is more often

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supported by appeals to supernatural authority. Carried to the point of loving our enemies, it does badly need such authority. But when kept within sane bounds and given its true name of imaginative sympathy, this Christian virtue is nothing more than reasonable. Gregarious by nature, we consist largely of reverberations, and cannot reach our own stature without taking into ourselves the experience of others. Taking thought for others is a great joy; it gives life that genial flow and backflow that make a game as well as an ocean of it. It satisfies also to the extent possible our solemn wish to be one with the world. There is no oneness except such as we create, and we create it by living in imagination the lives of all creatures. The prophets derive a false sentiment of love from the concept of unity or the fatherhood of God, but it is multiplicity and the orphaned condition of man that make real sympathy and kindness both indispensable and rewarding. Such sympathy begets tolerance, a virtue that has been strangely lacking among the devotees of the religion of love. It also begets humbleness, for no man fully alive to the prides of others can be overly proud of himself. More carefully, I should say that it begets, or makes possible, an equilibrium between the extremes of pride and humility, of tolerance and the intolerance that life also at times requires of us.

Thus even in the virtues, even in taking thought for others, we must be temperate if our aim is mortal life and not salvation from it. True temperance is unknown to the saints, for sainthood itself is an intemperance. But its need is obvious to those who live with fact and reason. It flows logically from a wish not only to avoid the death dealt by indulgence, but to possess aboundingly the joys of life. For these joys are diverse, and each requires a separate energy and an unspoiled taste. A man who has reveled to excess in one pleasure lies below ground in the ditch of it, and cannot see, much less explore, the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them.

Justice, I think, flows almost inevitably from the union of Greek with Christian ideals. The Greek word so translated did not mean all that we mean by *justice*. In Homer it meant "the way." It was the way things were done. And when disputes arose, if they were not to be settled by fighting, this way had to be decided by some judicial procedure. Applied to the decision thus arrived at, the

word came to mean not merely the customary, but the right way, or "rightness." It still meant "rightness"—or was traveling the road between "rightness" and "justice"—when Plato defined it as "everybody attending to his own business." He so defined its institutional aspect, meaning that every member of a class in his ideal state should perform the function proper to that class. And within the individual, he found the same word to mean "each part of him performing its proper function." This makes very little sense unless the word is translated "rightness." And what Aristotle has to say on the subject makes even less sense. It seems clear that the concept of justice as it stands in our minds did not exist for these philosophers. It did not come into being until Christianity had popularized in the West the ideal of sympathy, of doing to others as you would that they should do to you—or as Confucius more circumspectly put it, "not doing to others what you do not want done to yourself."

Justice, then, might be defined as the verdict of reason when sympathy is generalized. It does not demand that we love our neighbor as ourselves, an abnormal achievement and one that depends very largely, and quite properly, upon our neighbor. It demands that we judge our neighbor as ourselves, that we recognize both in private affairs and public institutions his equal right to build a life. That is high enough and hard enough, but it is a standard toward which we can aspire without becoming abnormal. And it has the same terrestrial authority as reason and sympathy, the Greek and Christian standards from which it was derived.

So far, then, my sermon follows the old sound track. No matter how mortal and matter-of-fact we become, up to this point the tradition of the cardinal virtues stands firm. A courageous, self-reliant, mindful, just, honest and temperate man, combining rational intelligence with kindly sympathy and the modesty and tolerance that go with it, is useful and beautiful on this earth, both to himself and others, and need not look to heaven either for justification or reward.

At this point, however, the tradition goes astray. To a mind dwelling resolutely on this earth, neither faith nor hope in the Christian sense is a virtue. If faith means believing in momentous ideas not supported by sound reason or convincing evidence, it is the first

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sin to be condemned by science. In faith's service every depraved and unsocial impulse of man has been given a function of honor. Faiths, being otherwise undetermined, make handy disguises for the lust of power and, so employed, have filled all history with cold, brutal and triumphant crime. If every man who ever kneeled to drink of an unverified belief had stood firm in the morale of suspended judgment, that, more than any miracle or revolution, would have led mankind toward paradise. We must raise into faith's place the discipline of doubt, of poised experimental thinking, if we are to live better, or live well, in this finite flux which is the only thing we know. To suspend judgment until facts are known requires courage; it invites thought; it makes room for sympathy; it gives time for justice; it is the supreme test of self-restraint. It has certainly a more natural place among virtues than faith!

And hope, too, is alien in this rigorous company. Hope is too fluid, and spreads too easily into self-deception and sentimental optimism, to be allowed a high place among virtues. Santayana's acceptance of unflinching disillusion is nobler in the mind. It was not hope in general, however, that Paul urged with such pathetic vehemence upon the early Christians. It was the one fixed hope of joy in heaven, a very immediate hope to him, but a hope useful only in abstaining from the joys of this earth. It was a hope of indemnification, and was never otherwise defined by that brilliant yet neurotic apostle. Paul shows none of the friendliness toward present pleasure that makes Jesus so stalwartly sweet and is so intrinsic to his gospel of imaginative sympathy. It is the fate of all great-hearted teachers to be distorted by some unbalanced disciple. But no other epigone in history, I suspect, has done mankind the damage Saint Paul did with his strident demand for the suppression of conviviality and natural passion.

"Those who belong to Jesus the Christ," he shouted, "have crucified the physical nature with its propensities and cravings." It was to support this continuous act of suicide that Paul made such a frantic fuss over hope as an abstract idea—a hope which "reaches up secure and strong into the sanctuary behind the heavenly curtain where Jesus has gone before us." It is well to remember that Jesus was already gone when this fixation upon hope as a great virtue

came into being. Until we purify our hearts of Paul's sin against life, purging away every inclination to associate virtue with the renunciation of carnal delight, we are not healthy enough, not well-balanced enough to live wisely in this world.

To replace, then, that heavenly decoy, hope, I am compelled—since committed by the form of my sermon to the number seven—to seek out a virtue more akin to nature and more conducive to health. Voltaire, in attacking the philosophy of optimism, put work in the place of hope, having thoroughly murdered the latter with his slashing pen. "Work, then, without arguing," said Martin. "It is the only way to make life supportable." And Candide agreed with him in a famous epigram: "We must cultivate our garden." Goethe came to a similar conclusion, although with an influence from the Christian gospel. Faust found his moment of happiness in digging canals designed to benefit the community in which he lived.

Work is indeed, like play, one of the most important things in this life. It is the only cure I have ever found for melancholy. And philanthropic work, if one happens to be philanthropic, is, I suppose, a way out of the clutches of the devil. A great many sanitariums have flourished on these principles, and the reason is not far to seek. To labor toward some end throughout the energetic hours is the normal condition of all animal life. Walt Whitman was wrong when he said, in praising the animals: "Not one is . . . industrious over the whole Earth." Even the lark must collect her ninety or a hundred bugs a day. That is reason enough for regarding work, and the having of a work to do, as an element of good hygiene. A robust man, however, wants to aim at something more stirring than his animal origins. He wants something better to inscribe on his banners than a medicine.

Growth, I think, rather than work, would be the scientific candidate for hope's place among the virtues. To one seeking the best without spurning his foothold in nature, growth seems almost the inevitable crown of the virtues. To grow continually without growing old—that is affirmative, dramatic, difficult. It is something that only man can do. It is the sole way, without being unnatural, to surpass nature. The Greeks have but one word for these two ideas,

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nature and growth. And the Chinese, I am told, write the word not by drawing a straight line over a plant as though everything had to grow in order to exist. But plants and animals grow only to the point of maturity, and then stop short or begin to recede. Man, having a mind, does not have to stop growing. He can understand what nature does, and extend without abandoning her ways. He can cultivate the garden of himself, a wisdom as simple as childhood and as native to the earth.

It is a wisdom much needed today, when so many are surrendering their selfhood to a state or a party, not through poverty or insecurity, but because they no longer know what to do with a self. They have lost confidence in the old supernatural directives and do not know where to turn for guidance in living a life. Had they known from tradition that every man has a duty to grow—had we the custom, for instance, of saying "What are you learning?" instead of "How do you do?"—they would not so lightly surrender to any exterior discipline the happiness to be found in doing this duty.

That is what fact and reason have mainly to say, it seems to me, about morals. A man who knows himself and knows the world, whatever his attitude to the mystery of the universal, needs no God and no Sunday-school teacher to tell him to be good. If he preserves, together with mindfulness, courage, sympathy, temperance, justice and the art of inquiry, the gift nature gave him of growth, he will live well, and with good luck will live happily; and when his time comes to fall to the ground with the sparrow, he will know that he has made a jewel of the accident of his being.

# State Parties and National Politics

### W. T. LAPRADE

The election of a new president and the transfer of responsibility of national political leadership from one party to the other, with an ensuing sense of frustration among many responsible for the change, suggest a consideration of how far these inevitable disappointments are inherent in our political structure. This consideration should center on a fact which we try to conceal in the years of Presidential campaigns, that rivalries of political leaders in the United States for public office are organized almost entirely with the state as the unit of operation.

Nevertheless, the national government has consistently from its beginning expanded its functions and proliferated machinery in an effort to fulfill its increasing responsibilities. Members of Congress have authorized the multiplication of federal agencies and have appropriated money for their support, while lamenting the expanding power of the executive. Representatives of the states have co-operated in enlarging the functions of the national government, while complaining that the rights of the states are infringed. But the need to preserve coherence in a society in which people depend increasingly upon each other and to mobilize the strength of the country in times of national emergency or international tension seems likely to continue to move our political leaders to be thus inconsistent in their speech and action.

Framers of the Constitution of the United States could look only backward; they drew their lessons from experience. They met to remedy weaknesses in the government under which they had co-operated to win independence. Congress clearly needed power to tax to obtain revenue for performing the tasks expected of a national legislature. There was also need of a responsible exe-

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cutive to serve as an agent for carrying out the behests of Congress. The provision of the Congress, the designation of its major functions, and the devising of a scheme of election were questions susceptible of compromise. Two senators "chosen by the Legislatures of the States" insured to each state an equal voice in one branch of the Congress. Members of the House of Representatives, the branch in which the people at large were to be represented according to numbers, were required to be citizens of the "States" from which chosen, and elected by those having "Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature."

Most of the members of the Convention which met in Philadelphia had previously sat in the Congresses of the Revolutionary period or in the succeeding years. They took it for granted that the election of members of both houses of the new Congress would be achieved in customary ways within the bounds of the several states. The national legislatures of the future, like those of the recent past, would be composed of men who had attracted attention by activities within the states. None would sit for a constituency including parts of more than one state.

The President and Vice-President would be officials of the nation. Members of the Convention worried much over the method of electing these officials and the duration of their term of office. Their experience with executives had been with the king or governors representing him. They recognized the need for an official with substantial powers. He was, for example, to be "Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy," to make treaties with the "Advice and Consent" of two-thirds of the senators—whatever that might mean—to appoint ambassadors and other ministers to foreign countries and a variety of domestic officials, to keep Congress advised and informed concerning the "State of the Union."

But members of the Convention did not think of him as a political leader with party management as a chief preoccupation. In fact, a majority of the members of the Convention thought of political parties as evils to be avoided. We recall that Washington, on retiring from the Presidency, warned the new Republic against "the baneful effects of the Spirit of Party." He had seen Jefferson resign from his Cabinet to lead a party seeking to capture the of-

fice of President upon his own retirement. But if the framers of the Constitution had thought of the President as a political leader, their difficulties in devising a plan for his election would have been magnified. As it was, they hit upon a scheme that for impractical naïveté has been equaled by few makers of constitutions.

They rejected the notion that members of Congress should elect the President, which would have had the merit of affording a chance for deliberation by a group of leaders having in some degree the confidence of their fellow-citizens in the several states and an opportunity for mutual acquaintance and discussion among themselves. Instead, they stipulated that the President should be selected by "Electors" appointed in each state "in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may decide," but "no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States" could be an "Elector." Nor would these electors assemble in a group and deliberate upon the responsibility entrusted to them. They would "meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons," only one of whom could be a fellow-citizen in the same state, and then "make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the number of Votes for each," to be transmitted "sealed to the Seat of Government of the United States." There in due time the votes would be counted by the "President of the Senate" in the presence of the members of both houses of Congress. The person "having the greatest number of Votes," provided he had a majority, would be President. "In every case, after the choice of President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors" would be the "Vice-President."

There would be times when this odd procedure would not produce a President. The House of Representatives would then take over, each state having one vote. Thus, in providing for the choice of the only two officials whose election could occasion political organizations national in scope, the members of the Convention seem to have taken every imaginable precaution to restrict the contest within the confines of the several states. In every case, national functions were to be entrusted to officials chosen locally.

Fortunately, the first electors agreed that the presiding officer of the Convention should be the first President of the United States.

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His Vice-President succeeded him. But by that time many opposed the choice; the leading candidate of that opposition became Vice-President. In the next election the victorious party found that its two candidates had an equal number of votes, and the House of Representatives had to choose between Jefferson and Burr. That experience proved sufficiently the need for a change in the Constitution, which was made before the next election.

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There had to be some method of nominating candidates for President and Vice-President if the voting of the electors was not to be habitually scattered and indecisive. The members of the Congress assembled in the capital, though ineligible to serve as electors, were better qualified to perform this function than any other groups likely to get together. For several decades, therefore, candidates for President and Vice-President were named by Congressional caucuses, sometimes after preliminary nominating resolutions by legislatures of the states. This method was more suitable for the group in office than for its opponents, likely to be less adequately represented in Congress. In 1832, the parties putting forward candidates assembled in nominating conventions. Since that time, the nominating convention has been the chief organization of such political machinery as the country has had on a national scale. The national committees of the parties serve as interim organizations between Presidential elections.

In these quadrennial conventions are assembled the active leaders of the major parties in the several states, the habitual seekers of office and positions of honor or prestige. These persons inevitably determine the character of the country's government. The marvel is that they work together as well as they do, considering that the only task they perform in common is to gather once every four years to select candidates for President and Vice-President and to formulate a statement of common aims or principles as little objectionable as may be to the constituent party groups in the states.

In fact, the party groups in the states are the vital units. They manage the campaigns for state and national elective offices. Dele-

gates to the national conventions are for the most part governors, members of the Congress, officials of the several states, or aspirants for those places from states where the party is not in power. With only two officers elected on a national scale, and these only once in four years, difference of opinion on national questions is by no means the most vital factor in party division. The important contests for office and places of political leadership occur within the confines of the several states. There party victories are gained and the rewards of success allocated. Essential factors in the party machinery and procedures are thus prescribed by the laws and customs of the several states. An indication of the flimsiness of the national organization of the parties is the practice of permitting the candidate for President, after his nomination, to select the national chairman of his party.

When these state politicians assemble in national conventions to select candidates for President, they naturally tend to turn to one of their own kind who has demonstrated an ability for political success. In the twentieth century the two major parties more often than not have selected as Presidential candidates governors of one or another of the states. Of the successful candidates in the past half-century, the two Roosevelts, Wilson and Coolidge served an apprenticeship as governors. Harding and Truman had served in the Senate. Taft and Hoover had been members of the Cabinet; the former required all of the influence of a successful President to procure his nomination and election. Hoover, like Eisenhower, achieved by distinguished service to the country in a time of war the reputation that made him available. The list of unsuccessful candidates serves to emphasize the point. Hughes, Cox, Smith, Landon, Dewey and Stevenson had been governors. Bryan and Davis had been twice elected to the House of Representatives. Parker resigned from the bench to lead a forlorn hope. Taft and Hoover failed of re-election to succeed themselves. Willkie was an attractive amateur.

Once the President is inaugurated, his prestige is unique; his powers are extensive, his responsibility enormous. All of this is an asset, though it may become a liability to the party groups in the several states who have co-operated to elevate him to office.

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In a sense he is their man; they share the spotlight focused on him. They try to mobilize the fruits of success to strengthen themselves in their states. The President soon discovers that he cannot disregard their wishes. But in a country with diverse interests, agreement with some local leaders involves disagreement with others. The President discovers that the chief basis of unity in his party was the campaign for his election; the continuing basis of unity is the fact that another election is in prospect before many years. Meantime, parties in the several states and in their subdivisions go on. Local elections take place.

The President himself is likely to be conscious of his responsibility as the national leader and as the country's chief executive. He cannot evade the latter trust. He may recruit lieutenants to advise and help, but action is in his name. He appoints officials by the thousand, communicates with rulers of other nations, commands armies, navies and air forces, and meditates upon the complex affairs of the world. His incidental pronouncements are studied in search of hidden meanings.

In a time of emergency or obvious national peril, a majority of political leaders in both major parties rally behind him, and he seems to speak for a united people. Congress affords him the means and approves the measures that seem necessary. Mature members of the current generation have seen these things happen so many times that they have come to take them for granted and have forgotten that the situation is abnormal. Rulers of other countries have come to expect the President to be able to promise and then to deliver.

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But this superficial exercise of power and seeming capacity for decisive action by the President is deceptive and tends to obscure the predicament in which the framers of the Constitution and the facts of political life in the several states place him. Few rulers exercise so much power; few wear a strait jacket which so effectively circumscribes action. When he first takes office, the President's appointments are confirmed, and a majority of his recommenda-

tions receive favorable consideration. But before long, he discovers that the state political leaders who nominated and elected him, while willing to share credit for his success, want no part in the responsibility for his failures. Supporters avail themselves of his popularity to strengthen their own positions but resent any actions which tend to make their own positions less secure. He pays for his place in the spotlight by being expendable.

Both houses of the Congress are continuing bodies. True, their members have to be re-elected, senators at intervals of six years and members of the House of Representatives at intervals of two. But their constituencies in each case are wholly within a single state. They can make common cause with other aspirants for office in their states; together these leaders constitute the political parties in the states. Senators and representatives are chosen in the first place because they know how to enlist their local fellow-citizens to respond to their leadership. They keep their places only so long as they continue to be able to do so. The good will of their constituents has always to be a primary consideration, else other candidates will soon replace them. Like most elected officers, they easily convince themselves that it better serves the general good to adapt themselves to the changing views of their constituents than it would to yield their posts to less experienced leaders.

The first meeting of the Congress after a biennial election is the only other occasion besides the quadrennial election of the President when officials are elected whose duties are national in scope. Members of both houses elect their presiding officers—bar the ex officio president of the Senate—and provide for their own internal organization. On these occasions, as in Presidential elections, we appear to have national political parties. Members who call themselves Republicans are likely to mobilize in a body against those who have been elected as Democrats. Only thus could the spoils of victory be allocated. In these elections members who may seldom vote together on other occasions adhere to the party line. After that ceremony is over and the committee assignments are made, the realities of the case are soon again clear.

There is, in fact, not much doubt concerning the outcome of most of the organizational contests, except as newly elected mem-

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bers seek advantageous first rounds on the ladder of seniority and those who have been longer on the scene bargain among themselves for places left vacant by deaths or failures of re-election. A shift in the party having the majority means that the former ranking minority member of a committee takes the chair; the late chairman sits near him as a ranking member from the minority party. A newcomer on the committee defers to and has to learn from these, his elders. The senior members of the committee, except in election years, seldom have time to interrupt their responsibility for getting the complex business of the country done to indulge in the general recriminations of national party politics.

These senior committee members, perhaps the most important voices in deciding questions of national political and governmental policy, are not necessarily the ablest members of the two houses. They usually represent constituencies that habitually vote the same way. Senators and representatives from states and districts where the parties are evenly matched seldom occupy these seats of the mighty, nor do men with pronounced views on questions concerning which there is general difference of opinion. It is, rather, the conciliatory and adaptable personality, with ability enough to get himself re-elected but without too aggressive or positive a character, who remains in Congress long enough to find his way to the head of the ever forming line that leads through experience to a place of prestige and influence. Men who are successful in arriving at these posts of leadership are unlikely to come from the "two-party" states or constituencies. It is no accident that we have recently witnessed the replacement in these posts of a number of men from states in the South by others from certain localities in the North and West.

This method of allocating the responsibilities of leadership in the national legislature seems to put a premium on mediocrity and to favor constituencies where important questions of the day are not a major concern of citizens. But it is easier to find fault with it than to suggest a better one to take its place. To encourage men of exceptional ability and ambition to plunge themselves too soon after election to Congress into contests for positions of leadership would probably give rise to more difficulties than it vould allay.

### IV

A local political leader who goes to Washington to represent his state or district is by no means free to meditate upon public questions and to vote according to the results of his meditation. His first obligations are to his local constituents, upon whose continuing favor he depends if he is to achieve influence or distinction in office. This may not mean compromising his own views. He won election because he and a majority of his constituents agreed about many current questions. He wishes so to conduct himself as not to vitiate these areas of agreement. If he ceases to be a local politician, he imperils his career.

He soon discovers that local interests are involved in plans national in scope projected by his party associates. In such cases, he may desert his party associates in favor of the local interests. He discovers that these local interests are sometimes best served by concerting action with members of the rival national party who have similar local interests to serve. He is not thereby disloyal to his own party. He will regularly support its candidates for President, for Speaker, and the like. He sometimes faces questions promoted by organized business, professional or other such groups concerning which his constituents have developed no pronounced views. Even in these cases he may discover that he is not left wholly free to consider what seems to him to be the merits of the question. The interest desiring to be served may be able to project its influence into his constituency more effectively than it has hitherto done. Or he may find that colleagues whose co-operation is needed in order to promote a vital local interest insist that he in turn go along in a case vital to them.

But congressmen who retain their seats and begin to achieve places of influence discover that many pressures which may complicate their careers come not from their local constituents nor from lobbyists for organized interests national in scope, but from government agencies. Heads of these agencies are appointed by the President and are responsible to him. In the aggregate, they constitute an immense bureaucracy established to perform tasks of manifold diversity and to expend every year billions of dollars. This execu-

tive apparatus has grown constantly since the founding of the Republic, and there is little indication that the scale of its activities will be reduced.

It is easy to join in condemnation of "big government" concentrated in Washington unless one becomes a senior member of a major committee of Congress. He may discover that many expenditures from the national treasury are dispensed locally, that a majority of federal employees are not denizens of Washington, and that the President does not have the task of directing these numerous agencies because of his appetite for power. Most of these agencies were created by Congress. They come annually with hats in hand seeking appropriations to enable them to perform their assigned tasks.

The President is responsible through an appropriate agency for preparing the annual budget and for transmitting it to Congress. He and the heads of the agencies under him have the duty of formulating plans, estimating their costs and, later, of doing what is decided upon. They render the public service and spend the public money. They cannot escape their share of blame when things go awry. Responsible administrators, even more than the President himself, are thus expendable; they come and go. But many more officials having knowledge of what needs to be done and how to do it abide. Upon them the country depends to get most of its work done. They naturally try to equip themselves with means for doing it and learn by experience how to do so.

When the requests contained in the budget are considered by appropriate committees of the Congress, the abiding members of these committees and the abiding administrative officials have at some stage to reach an understanding. Operations of the government have to be provided for. Congress has to provide the means and the authority; effective administrative officials have to operate within this framework. Thus administrative officials try to explain as far as possible the nature of their tasks to influential members of appropriate Congressional committees. Committee members give much attention to their own responsibility; they have to explain these matters to their colleagues, most of whom have to devote similar attention to other aspects of public business. In conducting

these negotiations, administrative officials are dealing with recurring phases of their own professional obligations. Experienced members of Congressional committees have to think habitually of colleagues whose support must be persuaded and of their own immediate careers. To introduce national party politics into these negotiations, except in rare cases where the national parties have made definite public pronouncements, would be to complicate further a process that is difficult at best.

Both parties to the agreement finally reached prefer to have it written down. Administrative officials wish to have statutory prescriptions to insure as far as possible the financial support of their plans and to safeguard themselves from blame. Participating members of Congress wish to stipulate that the authorization granted and the expenditure of the funds provided shall be limited in the manner Congress intends. The inevitable result is a statutory strait jacket vesting a minimum of discretion in executive and administrative officials, and frequently affording license for waste and offering little chance or incentive for efficiency or economy.

Whenever the force of general circumstances or the pressure of the public will moves Congress to act in a new field, it tends to add another to the list of federal agencies. The President has new officials to appoint, new organizations for which he is responsible, new expenditures for which to budget. If the new agency performs a function corresponding to a public demand, it becomes a part of the general bureaucracy. Those responsible for its administration try in seeking annual authorization and appropriations to justify and to enhance their functions as a basis for further or increased support. Responsible members of Congress, who provided for the agency in the first place, suffer it to continue, as they are convinced that it promotes the general good or has public approval.

For many aspects of the President's leadership the public ought to hold him responsible, but he is only partly responsible for the growing functions of the federal government. His responsibility is to make recommendations and to see that the enacted will of the Congress is carried out. To make sure that money is spent according to its prescriptions, Congress has established and maintains the General Accounting Office.

### STATE PARTIES AND NATIONAL POLITICS

Insofar as the functioning of the national government is not responsive to the public will and in the general interest, therefore, Congress deserves the major part of the blame. But it is easier to vent public displeasure on the President than on the Congress, which is composed of members from many localities, each member responsible only to his constituents. A senator or representative tries so to conduct himself as to retain the favor of those who elected him. The political shoulders of the President are much broader than his. Where vital local interests are at stake, he does not hesitate to oppose the recommendations of national leaders of his party, whether in Congress or the Presidency.

Only occasionally does the party line determine the vote when the houses of Congress are considering legislation. On a vast majority of the questions there is no clear difference between the parties, although members of the responsible committees frequently differ among themselves without regard to national party alignment. It would be surprising if this were not the case.

The experiment has been tried occasionally of having the members of a party in Congress caucus in an effort to bind themselves to support a common agreement. This expedient is more likely to work when a party returns to power with a considerable majority after a long period as a minority. It was used by the Democrats in the early years of the first Wilson administration. When this procedure is feasible, there is a measure of national party responsibility. At present the majority party does not have a sufficient majority to allow the defections due to local interests and still leave the appearance of effective action.

V

It is easier to state this lack of responsibility to corresponding political organizations in our national government than to suggest a remedy. Those familiar with the more effective results obtained in Great Britain and in other countries where the principal executive officers are members of and responsible to the legislature have advocated that practice in the United States. It is unlikely to be adopted. The doctrine of the "separation of the powers" has been

a part of our tradition from the beginning. The British originated the doctrine experimentally while floundering in search of a workable scheme of government, but soon rejected it while seeming to accept it. Our government has developed its current practices on the assumption that it is the business of Congress to make plans and to provide the means, and of the President to see that these means are used to carry out the plans agreed upon.

Thus the national public cannot bring effective pressure to bear upon the members of Congress, who are elected locally and participate only incidentally in national politics, though national government is their major responsibility. Since the principal function of the national parties is to elect a President, and incidentally the leaders of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the fundamental unit of political activity is the state. There most men ambitious for places of leadership launch their careers; there most political careers continue and are completed.

State parties that co-operate every four years to try to elect a President have to find bases for common action general enough to include the organizations in all the states, and a candidate with reputation and strength enough at least not to lessen the chance of local victory. Under these circumstances, when time brings discontent with the party in office, the President is likely to be the scapegoat. Voters may vent their pent-up emotions on him to a degree almost pathological, and at the same time return to influential and decisive posts most of the members of the Congress who acquiesced in and provided for the doing of the things criticized. Those responsible for informing the public might at least take pains to make clear the location of the place of decision. But experience seems to show that when national party leaders try to intervene in the general interest in a local constituency, it is likely to arouse resentment among local voters.

# ........... Under Whatever Sky ......

### IRWIN EDMAN

### On Renouncing One's Past

I was about ten years old, I think, when I made my first attempt to renounce my past. I decided to put away childish things, including building blocks, forever. I did not have my vita nuova particularly planned; I had no program for a life more abundant. But it came over me all of a heap, as the London charwoman said, that playing blocks, building silly castles out of small pieces of wood, or towers, or even railway stations, was something I must put definitely behind me. At that early period of my life and of the century, I had no suspicion, nor had most of my elders learned from Freud, that one's past lives on, in one's subconscious if nowhere else and, as life teaches us later, in the sometimes inconvenient memories of other people. I simply arose from the floor and announced to my playmates that I had parted company with the bygone.

Literature is, of course, filled with examples of persons, real or feigned, who have sought to put their past behind them: Julien Sorel on his way to Paris, David Copperfield on his way to Dover, St. Paul on the way to Damascus. These persons were at least moving toward something new while they were leaving their pastthe provincial town, the blacking factory or, in Paul's case, all of Judaism—behind them. Until one learns better, one tries to cut one's self from one's early history at a given date, such as one's thirteenth birthday or any New Year's Day. One is interested not only in turning over a new leaf, but in being sure that all the previous pages are destroyed.

One ought to learn, but one never quite does, that one cannot abolish one's previous history. Sometimes now at very great expense, one can gradually and painfully exorcise it on the couch of a psychoanalyst. But there it is still, in some trivial ges-

ture, some turn of feeling, some nuance of thought, or in the memory of friends on had neglected or forgotten, or had tried to All this is lucky, too. How bare and blead and colorless we would be if our past die not persist, despite our efforts at erasure And the first thing we know, the very esterday we renounced turns up as a golder age recollected. Sentimental memory play havoc with all our fine renunciations.

### Deterioration Complex

A few years ago there was a mutiny in Dartmoor Prison in England. The Chair man of the Royal Commission was not man to study conditions at second hand. He went down to the prison itself and in terviewed, among others, one of the oldes inmates in the institution, one who has not been involved in the uprising. "What brought about this mutiny?" he asked "Quite frankly, what? The food, the discipline, what?"

"Well, sir," replied the old "lag" quit politely, "I have been a member of thi prison man and boy for forty years. I thinl sir, I may properly claim to call this plac my home. Now some says one thing, sin and some says another, but," he said, low ering his voice, "it's my belief, sir, we'r not getting the stamp of man in 'ere w used to."

I had heard Englishmen say quite seriously that the older type of British crimina was really a very decent chap. Even if prisons there is a tradition of the old school tie, of not letting your side down. The old est convict sees a deterioration in his fellow convicts, and not only in England. No are prisoners alone in this respect. Senator complain that the Senate has come down if the world, as I have heard barbers complain that the younger barbers no longer know their trade. If the complaints of each generation were as justified as they are be

each generation believed to be, the world would now be at a very low ebb. By the ame token, if men were once really like gods, it must have been a very long time igo. It clearly required a longish era to come down to our present state. Similarly, inless we are all blown to pieces by our own nitherto unparalleled stupidity, we shall nave a long way to go before we get to the nadir of human worth. It is small comfort when we reflect on the villainies of our time that posterity will look at itself and some of he older members of it will, looking back on the human race, reflect, "We're not geting the stamp of man we used to." Will hey, will they just possibly, be meaning us?

### Index of Qualified Rapture

Some years ago there was published a volume entitled Dictionary of Invective and Abuse. I remember it because I made the nistake of giving it to a friend for a birthlay gift, and he thought I was offering it o him as a subconscious summary of my pinion of him. The lexicon was really not complete or adequate. It could not be, for hough it contained some classic examples of urbanely stated abuse, it could not incorporate all the expletives, the ambiguities, the barbarities that scorn privately commands or exploits or is driven to.

I was reminded of the natural vivacity of the language of contempt by a more reent publication, Lexicon of Musical Invective, in which the editor selects the ingenious things critics of the past have ound to say about contemporary works which posterity has found noble and beauiful. The editor drew the moral that the infamiliar is always obnoxious even to the nformed. I derived a different lesson: the pleasures of the dialect of rage, the virtuoso oys of condescension or impatience or corn.

Anyone who has any experience reviewing books knows what is meant by the phrase, "Oh, that mine enemy would write a book." Oh, that the stupid, the pretentious, he faker would write a book, especially one that by the very blandness of its arrorance would insinuate itself into a certain

eminence. How the vocabulary quickens when the opportunity presents itself of taking a strong line or a satiric one. How varied are the ways which one immediately thinks of to damn the pompous, to castigate the silly, to ridicule the empty, to mock the solemnly trivial! How imagination responds to the opportunities of being conscientiously malicious!

The vocabulary of praise is more difficult. This fact becomes distressingly familiar on the many occasions, for instance, when it becomes necessary to write a letter of recommendation, say, of a former student. One trots out all the best things one knows about the worthy young man who is applying for a fellowship, a first teaching job. It goes without saying, but one has to say it, that the youth is a person of unquestioned integrity and of unusual charm. He is, but the words sound blandly unconvincing as one writes them. Even integrity is not uncommon among the young, and charm, unusual charm, is quite widespread. So-and-so would make an excellent teacher; he has both clarity and enthusiasm and is a first-rate scholar. One means these things, they are true, but how often one has had to say them about how many people; and one hesitates to use, or to try even to find, more unconventional ways of indicating virtue to administrators, not as a rule hospitable to eccentrics. What a fine letter one could write if one only had a candidate one wanted not to recommend! One expresses one's commendations with an enthusiasm which sounds factitious or with a sobriety which sounds dull. It is a pity one achieves one's highest flights in one's lowest opinions.

### The Nostalgia Industry

The title of Frank Sullivan's recent collection of essays about sums up the memoir situation: The Night the Old Nostalgia Burned Down. Virtually every literate family in the country has some member of it putting down on paper blotted with tears and shaken by laughter those recollections of the good young days on the farm in Minnesota, on the old estate in Denmark, in

the mansion on Belgrave Square, or in Moscow. Not content with dredging up the past out of the inner consciousness, or perhaps unable to do so, many have for a generation now been collecting antiques. Antiquity grows nearer and nearer. It seems only yesterday that "Victorian" was the name for the last word in stuffiness and bad taste. But Victorian lamps and furniture, I am told, now fetch a pretty price. The latest form of the passion for antiques is the collection of ancient cars, "ancient" meaning as recent as 1920.

To burn always with an old nostalgic flame is the new restrospective Epicureanism. It is not surprising that at the pace at which we are moving, the relatively recent and the remotely antique have become one. It is certainly so in the realm of ideas. To the astonished first reader, Plato and Aristotle seem amazingly fresh and "modern" (a word every generation naively uses as a compliment). But the ideas of fifteen, ten, five years ago already have a period flavor.

Where are the ideologies not of yesteryear, but of yesterday? I have a friend who has no collection of quaint old automobiles. But he displays, proudly and almost constantly, quaintly old-fashioned notions and delightfully dated vocabularies. Any night at his house, over a cocktail before dinner or over a brandy after it, you can hear him bring forth the quaint period-piece jargon of the behaviorism of the twenties, the technocracy of the thirties. He trots out even the early-model Freudian lingo as comparable in antique charm with a Maxwell steamer car. But he has begun pushing things a little hard. It is stretching a point to call existentialism "antique." But perhaps it won't be long now.

### New Wine in New Bottles

I saw an advertisement the other day of a widely read—and deservedly so—novel that had sold in the hundreds of thousands. The publishers had apparently decided that just about everybody had read it who could possibly be expected to do so. It was no use any longer saying, "Read the book that almost everybody has read." For all practical purposes everyone had read i The publishers decided on a new track "It is time now to read it again."

The wholesale book merchants undoubt edly were well aware of what had hap pened to the previously purchased volume. It had been loaned to someone who wa going to return it promptly. But it was a long book, and it took time to read, and somehow it was never brought back. Clearly it was time not only to read it, but to but it a second time.

One cannot help speculating a little or what on earth the publisher had in mine by saying it was time to read it again. On arrives at a period in life when there ar lots of good reasons for rereading a bool one has read as a child, as an adolescent in one's twenties. Only last summer picked up by accident a bedside copy d Cranford in the guest room of an Englis home I was visiting. Where, I asked my self, was my sense of humor when I rea it, by prescription, in high school? O where was my teacher's? Why did I g all these years recalling it as a little stuff and a little genteel, or simply a period piece? It was indeed time to read it again And Gulliver's Travels, and Thoma Browne, and all the books that one doc not exhaust or even quite understand th fiftieth time, or imaginatively realize con pletely even then. Time to go back to th 'great" books and, if the truth be tole find out, perhaps for the first time, that the adjective is just.

But a book only two years old! Time t read it again? Astonishing doctrine, sul versive to the whole of the publishing it dustry, and a conspiracy against working authors. One can imagine that soon th book pages will be filled with advertise ments of last year's masterpieces which mus be read again. No wonder we shan't ge around to reading the new books. We sha have a matchless excuse. We're busy goin back to the volumes that last year we wer assured were different, were wonderfu Who knows? On a second try they migh turn out to be so. And, meanwhile, it just too bad if genius just hot off the pre languishes unread.

# ..... The Revolving Bookstand .....

#### Behaviorism with a Vengeance

EXUAL BEHAVIOR IN THE HUMAN FEMALE. By Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin, Paul Gebhard. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company. 842 pp. \$8.00.

#### Reviewed by ABRAM KARDINER

Dr. Kinsey and his associates have by ow, with their volume on Sexual Behavior the Human Female, established themlves among the great sexologists of history. This book is a true product of our time, nd it carries the popular authority of the pinion poll and the questionnaire method tracking down social phenomena. It has, herefore, the timely authority of the stastical method that is so prominent in our merican ethos, and it has introduced into he study of sexology the technique of the sembly line. If Havelock Ellis was the aive describer and historian, Freud the rearcher into psychodynamics, Kinsey et al. present the invasion of the field by the ehaviorist armed with a computing ma-

Like any assembly-line procedure, it is ficient and slick. It is a veritable encycloedia of information; and its data are ranged in such a way that with very little ouble any woman can thumb through this ook and come out with a chart of her own ersonal standing in the great norm that is erewith established. It is also a source for tisfying the most prurient in every posble detail of what other people are doing their sexual lives.

Dr. Kinsey's method is one of many for

Dr. Abram Kardiner is clinical professor of schiatry at Columbia University. He is the thor of The Individual and His Society and he Psychological Frontiers of Society.

studying sexual behavior, and it yields some information that cannot possibly be ascertained in any other way. For this part of his labors all students of sex will be indebted to him for a long time. Notwithstanding serious flaws in sampling, the undue weighting of the sample toward urban groups, educated groups and certain religious groups, this book gives a broad sweep of the distribution of certain forms of sexual activity. We doubt whether more accurate sampling would materially affect his results, though it might satisfy those who are now willing to penalize him by disqualifying all his findings. There is some information here that is invaluable to the student of contemporary social trends: the demonstration of the shift in the sexual behavior of the female toward greater sexual freedom in the past fifty years is decisive and startling; the consistent effect of deep religious conviction on sexual behavior is likewise dramatic and challenging. These and a score of other valuable correlations make this book indispensable to any student of contemporary culture. This is what makes it one of the great human source books of our time.

But Dr. Kinsey is not fully aware that his method of working is not only his tool, but also his tether. He is unwilling to remain within the confines that his method logically demands in the canons of scientific procedure. This failure to recognize the limitations of his procedure leads him to draw conclusions to which he is not entitled and to ignore others of high import because they cannot be fitted into the procedure. What else can be expected? He first divides sexual behavior into a fixed number of identifiable "parts," only one of which, the orgasm, can be qualified by "yes" or "no." This alone can be quantified and then correlated against certain fixed social condi-



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ions like age, marital status, profession, ducation, religion, et cetera. Motivations annot be measured in the same way. Therefore, they are omitted. Not being in my position to evaluate the relative imporance between the items he can and those to cannot include, he therefore does not resitate to draw his conclusions from those lata that his procedure has rendered releant. Naturally he treats the findings of all other procedures in a very cavalier manner.

This is behaviorism with a vengeance! Ioreover, his behaviorism is stretched to inlude mammalian sex behavior and the verages of sexual norms in other cultures. rying to establish a norm for sexual beavior including mammals and primitive ultures is like setting out to take the mean emperature of all patients in a five-hunred-bed hospital on the principle that since hey are all in a hospital, they must be sick. Ve can then get a mean temperature of 01.8. This figure is meaningless because it taken out of the only meaningful context h which temperature would be significant, amely, what disease the patient has. So Dr. insey ignores the fact that sex custom and ex behavior are always embedded in a beial context without which they cannot e understood and in a motivational conext without which they are meaningless. herefore, Dr. Kinsey's assumptions lead im astray. He insists, for example, that uman homosexuality is a biological variant ecause it occurs in lower forms of life. his is a misleading conclusion, because omosexuality means persistent choice to e exclusion of the opposite sex. Such a henomenon is unknown in lower forms of fe, notwithstanding transient phenomena at resemble it.

Dr. Kinsey, therefore, not only misleads in the takes sexual behavior out of its otivational context, whereas man is disnguished by the fact that sexual behavior integrative, cumulative, subject to disimination and choice, and ultimately tied the total emotional development. Morever, although his data show a distinct tange in sexual behavior in the past fifty ears, Dr. Kinsey cannot tell us why this ook place, but he insists he is describing

the "human female." He is merely describing the American female, 1939-1950.

The limitations of his methods lead Dr. Kinsey into great difficulties in establishing the meaning of the orgasm which is central in his quantifying procedure. This is really the pivot of the entire work. The extent of female frigidity in Kinsey's sample proves to be, according to his method, very small and for a very good reason. Whereas the male orgasm is unmistakable, the female orgasm is not. None but those who have had gradations of orgastic experience know what is meant when the question is put. In clinical practice many females answer this question "yes," when the fact is, as is ultimately discovered, any tickle or thrill is interpreted as orgasm. Moreover, by making the clitoral orgasm the basis for his standard and refusing to acknowledge the difference between this and the vaginal orgasm, many a woman in his sample is recorded orgastic on a technicality. Thus a woman who is capable of clitoral orgasm through masturbation but incapable of coital orgasm, clitoral or vaginal, unless manipulated by herself or her mate emerges as orgastic in the record. Besides, he ignores the fact that orgastic potency is the resultant of the total emotional relationship with the mate and is not merely a spinal reflex. This failure to standardize his central unit of study is therefore a high source of error.

What faith can we place in Dr. Kinsey's work? There is still a good deal. Since the same standards are used throughout, relative differences can be relied upon, and this still leaves a great store of valuable information.

However, when Dr. Kinsey steps out of his role as reporter and becomes both an interpreter and an advisor, we can no longer trust him. His advice is often misleading and in some issues perhaps harmful. Masturbation is not a training school for coital potency, nor is premarital intercourse a way of improving one's chances for successful marriage. It is advice of this kind, explicit or implied, that shows up the importance of the motivational factors that Dr. Kinsey could not include in his armamentarium. He inevitably winds up putting the statis-



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tical cart before the motivational horse, and it is upon this kind of upside-down reasoning, in which the role of cause and effect is reversed, that Kinsey comes by the advice he so freely offers. Furthermore, the entire work is conceived without regard for those ends that sex morality purports to bring about and without regard for the social evolution of which this sex morality is the end product. Sex custom is one of the main supports of the entire structure and functioning of society.

What is of value in this book could have been stated in one-tenth the space, and the high merit of what is of value is spoiled by the overconfidence the authors show in a method that is limited and pressed into the service of attempting problems it cannot solve. One cannot use arithmetic to solve problems in tensor physics. At a time when crucial issues in sex morality are being wrought in the toils of painful and costly social experimentation, misinformation is dangerous and can only have one outcome. It will add still more confusion to the sexual unrest of our time. And for this, not Dr. Kinsey, but the public will pay the price.

### Frankly of the Earth

THE GOLDEN AGE OF HOMESPUN. By Jared van Wagenen, Jr. Illustrated. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press. 280 pp. \$3.50.

#### Reviewed by Donald N. Bigelow

Taking his title from Horace Bushnell, who was extolling the merits of life in the first half of the nineteenth century, and concerning himself almost exclusively with upper New York State during that period, Mr. van Wagenen has written an interesting and sentimental book about "the farm life, the household handicrafts, and the rural occupations of that bygone era." Farm-born,

<sup>©</sup> DONALD BIGELOW, assistant professor of history at Columbia University, is the author of William Conant Church and the Army and Navy Journal and co-editor of the Makers of the American Tradition Series.

#### The Retreat from Learning in Our Public Schools

#### by ARTHUR E. BESTOR

Professional educationists fail to understand the true purposes of education; and because they do, they are guilty of hindering the intellectual growth of the millions of children who attend public schools every year. That is the grave charge which Professor Bestor makes in a book which, as Bernard Iddings Bell puts it, "speaks the mind of our American men of learning, who are mostly ignored by our 'educators.'"

Readers of the American Scholar will recall the author's article in the Spring 1952 issue: "Liberal Education and a Liberal Nation." It excited such enthusiastic response that he felt encouraged to write this book, which "blames the 'interlocking directorate of educationists' for watering down liberal education into meaningless curricula, discouraging intellectual development and independence on the part of public school teachers and substituting unrealistic pedagogy for scholarly competence." — Saturday Review. \$3.50



#### **LEGER**

by Katharine Kuh

Here is the first book in English on Fernand Léger, who only recently has begun to receive his just share of attention. Mrs. Kuh, author of Art Has Many Faces, provides a keen and sympathetic account of Legér's development as an artist. And by way of illustration there are four color plates and over 75 in black-and-white which are reproductions of the outstanding paintings and drawings now being shown at New York's Museum of Modern Art. \$5.75



# HOW NATIONS SEE EACH OTHER

1

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and proud of it, the author, a professional farmer, has spent his eighty-two years within sight of fields and the smell of animals. The book, he admits, "is frankly of the earth, earthy." It is an attempt to put into "some permanent form some record of the lore and the methods by which our forebears lived upon the land."

The years of which Mr. van Wagenen writes were, he says, "good years," and he implies that they were better years than those in which we live today. "I am glad to boast," he announces, "that we have never wholly adopted the newer ways of life." In spite of the material progress made during the last century, he doubts whether we have enjoyed "greater happiness" than did his great-grandfather, whose own life spanned "the golden age of homespun" when a man relied upon "his trusty ax" and "his trusty ox team." The homespun age nourished—and the author is quite explicit about this point—"many splendid qualities of heart and brain."

How the forests were cleared, what tools were used and how they were made, the crops that were raised, and the various occupations in which the early settlers were engaged are all explained with tenderness and a sympathetic attention that reveals the author's personal predilections. The book is informative and will certainly prove fascinating to those who know nothing about life on a farm before the days of electricity and artificial insemination. The account of how the forest was cleared and the amount of timber that the early settlers burned in the process (often without salvaging one piece of wood) is an example of Mr. van Wagenen's ability both to tell a story well and to capture the essence of the pioneer's life.

With great patience and not a little repetition, the author has assembled many facts which help to describe in somewhat uncritical but intimate terms the life of the early farmer. No one who has lived on a farm, even in recent times, can fail to find in this book a delineation of the fundamental facts of farm life which, in spite of the ubiquitous works of technology and the Department of Agriculture, still prevail.

The sources used by the author include his own experiences, those of his friends and his family, and the New York State census figures for 1845 and 1855. The census reports are his bible. Indeed, he refers to them so frequently and interprets them so freely that the statistics have a monotonous effect which often interrupts the author's story without proving anything. Paradoxically, the census reports do not cover the golden age of homespun, for after 1845 (or thereabouts) the golden age was in eclipse. The author's attempt "to reconcile somewhat shadowy traditions with more recent factual findings" is usually unsuccessful. His use of figures in regard to Cattaraugus County (the last county in the state to be settled) illustrates this point. He quotes from the records of 1855 at some length, assuming that conditions in Cattaraugus at that time "indicate something of the setting of the stage on which was enacted the long, patient . . . pageant of the homespun age." It is doubtful whether the situation in Cattaraugus by 1855 provides an adequate guide to the situation in, say, Columbia County as early as 1825. The fact that 267 carpenters lived in the former county (we are told twice that it is 267 and twice that it is 257) seems to bear little, if any, relation to the number of carpenters who lived in Columbia County thirty years previously. Without Columbia County's own development, the situation in Cattaraugus would undoubtedly have been quite different. Yet, in effect, we are asked to assume that the picture for the last settled county-and as late as 1855, at that-indicates the relative number of carpenters to farmers in the homespun period.

The question of the pioneer's self-sufficiency is examined by Mr. van Wagenen and here must be re-examined. While the author makes much of the farmer's supposed self-sufficiency, he also shows that behind the early settler there was "the second-line army made up of that wholly indispensable company who carried on the pioneer handicrafts." He offers no evidence, however, that this did or did not take place during the golden age, which may or may not have been as self-sufficient as Catta-

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raugus County was in 1855. In this reviewer's estimation, Cattaraugus was not much more self-sufficient than is the modern "gentleman" farmer; for, as Mr. van Wagenen points out, in 1855 there were some 2,343 persons whose vocation was other than farming, and the greater part of them are supposed to have serviced the farmer in one way or another. That the American farmer was ever self-sufficient is highly questionable.

The author's insistent reliance upon the statistical data obtained from the two census reports and also his occasional reference to other printed sources, such as John Fiske's The Beginnings of New England or Dr. U. P. Hedrick's A History of Agriculture in the State of New York, fail to make this a well-documented book. But this is a book of reminiscences, rich and varied, partly autobiographical, and largely anecdotal. It is when telling the tales he heard from a farm helper, John P. Schaeffer; or his old crony, John Brown; or Lot Hall, friend and farmer for many long years, that the author makes his greatest contribution to explaining "the lore and the methods by which our forebears lived upon the land." On the other hand, Mr. van Wagenen has drawn a clear picture of his own early days on the farm (after the Civil War) rather than of the golden age of homespun.

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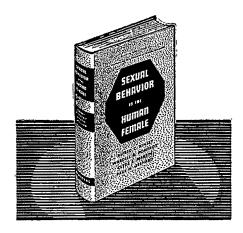
### Furred and Winged Actors

ICEBOUND SUMMER. By Sally Carrighar. Illustrated by Henry B. Kane. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 262 pp. \$3.95.

#### Reviewed by Paul A. Zahl

Nature lore is open to a number of approaches. The ecologist sees it in terms of population pressures, climate, food supply; the geneticist considers life from an evolutionary bias; the physiologist finds the driving factors to be hormones, internal bio-

© PAUL A. ZAHL is a research biologist. His articles on nature subjects have appeared in a variety of publications, including the National Geographic Magazine. He is the author of Flamingo Hunt, published in 1952.



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This is the only book on female sexual behavior written or authorized by the staff of the Institute for Sex Research at Indiana University. (Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin, Paul H. Gebhard, and others.)

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emistry; the taxonomist views fauna and ra in terms of distribution patterns, eciation; the comparative psychologist terprets animal behavior as the resultant interacting tropisms, reflexes and inners. But—it is said in learned circles—hosoever presumes to represent the lower simals in humanized terms is either tamering with license or writing for the

irsery.

Sally Carrighar's *Icebound Summer* is ithely full of such presumptions. She eaks of the lemming as "impatient" and bored," of the tern's "sense of outrage"; e fox "could take pleasure in watching polar bear's expert swimming," and the hale's "great sympathetic heart pulsed ith his yearning." Miss Carrighar reveals erself not primarily as an ecologist, genetist, physiologist, taxonomist or comparave psychologist; she is a poet seeing natal history in sentient rather than literal mensions.

In the eleven vignette-like chapters that imprise Icebound Summer, the author's erceiving eye settles successively on the mming, the seal, the fox, loon, tern, hale, walrus, faun, plover and other wildle representatives which during the brief rctic summer appear in burgeoning abunince throughout Alaska's permafrost reons. Each of these animals is followed rough one phase or another of its life rcle; and, while many of the book's hardre facts fall into the category of twiceld tales, they are invested with such 1arm and vigor that the reader does not ind hearing again, for example, of the mming's nigh incredible death march to ie sea, of the fish-tossing flight of a pair courting terns, of the perennially preyeking Eskimo. Miss Carrighar stalks her irious protagonists across cracking ice bes, into blue-cold depths, through forest, indra and sky. One feels the sting of ukon winds and sees the Arctic's breaking hiteness; one senses the ferment of life; ne learns something of the endless struggle live, of the unceasing drive to reprouce.

Miss Carrighar's animal people, morhologically as dissimilar as a tern and a polar bear, exhibit a subjective sameness—but this, in the reviewer's opinion, has justification. Interpreters of nature who would have bears fierce because they appear so, plovers gentle by the same token, are forgetting that in the eyes of its natural enemy or intended victim, every animal species is the personification of terror. To have endowed her animals with contrasting personalities would place Miss Carrighar in Walt Disney's camp.

That Icebound Summer is written in breadth and color, and not additionally in depth, is also true to the author's intention. To go into the functional whys and wherefores of this Arctic menagerie might have resulted in a treatise rather than a readable book. Many a trained biologist can write with topical understanding in the field of natural history. Rare, however, is the writer—and Sally Carrighar is certainly one such—who can breathe life into a life cycle, who can turn a walrus into something other than a pinniped mammal.

Some of the Arctic settings against which Miss Carrighar directs her furred and winged actors truly gleam; here her gift of language serves faithfully. Elsewhere, overrich writing causes the picture to lose resolution; here the reader must depend on vaguely feeling rather than clearly realizing the action and the background. Occasionally, line-speaking human characters pass across the scene; these are not overly sharp, but do nevertheless serve the needed function of breaking the monotony of the otherwise oppressively continuous preoccupation with nature.

For the literate reader who loves and appreciates his nature uncorrupted by analytics, *Icebound Summer* is a most appealing contribution to the literature of the North. For the reader who must have, along with his nature lore, the sauce of penetrating insight, the book may leave a bit to be desired. Miss Carrighar is as yet no Muir or Thoreau, but she treads their paths with originality and freshness.

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#### A Vital Human Occupation

POETRY AND THE AGE. By Randall Jarrell. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 271 pp. \$4.00.

#### Reviewed by Louis Simpson

Randall Jarrell's book about poetry and the criticism of poetry pulls the bung-cork out of the barrel. The reader is exhilarated, led on to agree with Mr. Jarrell joyfully, even to cap his opinions—and at last to grow reckless. In speaking of Whitman's rhetoric, Mr. Jarrell says, "If the reader thinks that all this is like Thomas Wolfe he is Thomas Wolfe; nothing else could explain it." Bravo! How right he is, and how right we are, right along with him. On the other hand, in speaking of certain poems by Frost, Mr. Jarrell says, "Anybody who doesn't know them doesn't know some of the summits of our poetry, and is so much to be pitied that it would be foolish to blame him too." Now it is we who are to be pitied or blamed, for we have read the poems and they leave us cold. Why then, if, as about Frost, we often disagree with Mr. Jarrell, do we still feel that his book is one of the few about poetry which merit a tinker's profanity? We feel it because the author exercises a sympathetic response to the poet's intention and, more important, he is convinced that poetry is one of the vital human occupations, inseparable from emotion, inseparable from life.

Poetry and the Age is enormously readable. The chapters which make up this collection occasioned a great deal of comment as they appeared in various quarterlies, and it was perhaps their readability which was most remarked upon. For here, in an age of New Critics, they said, was a critic who could write. It has been ironic that for many years the style of poetry has been discussed, and measures for poetic style have been laid down, by men who cannot write well in their own medium, prose. Mr. Jarrell writes well because he remembers what outstanding poets and critics have always

© LOUIS SIMPSON is an assistant editor of the Bobbs-Merrill Company He has published poetry in The American Scholar and elsewhere, and is now working on a verse play. known: poetry is serious, but never dead serious. To write about things of the first importance, you must know the things of the second and third. To rise, you must know how to fall; you cannot write Macbeth or The Eve of St. Agnes if you do not have an acute awareness of the comic possibilities. From an interest in other things, so strong that words seem inadequate to express it, comes grace with words.

Not only by his readability, his wit, is Mr. Jarrell distinguished. He is distinguished also by his method of criticismor rather, his refusal to pretend that he has one. He quotes Eliot, who remarked that criticism is a matter of being highly intelligent. He goes at the poem without having, apparently, a vested interest to protect. If he has persuaded you that William Carlos Williams' Paterson, Book I is a fine poem, he does not—just to be consistent—shrink from pointing out that Paterson, Book IV is a poor one. His enthusiasms are his own. His chapters on Robert Frost seem doomed to please neither those who have always liked Frost nor those who haven't. He conveys his enthusiasms by persuading, by quoting. He sometimes creates a mosaic of quotations. Indeed, I thought once or twice that Mr. Jarrell had written new poems for his favorite authors by putting their best lines together.

It is not possible with Mr. Jarrell—as it is with Mr. R. P. Blackmur, for example—to predict just what his attitude will be toward a particular poet, a particular poem. After reading Mr. Blackmur for a while, one gets—apart from the feeling of being hit over the head with texts—the vague outlines of a theology: Pound, whatever he does, will be saved; Hart Crane, though he write as angels, must be damned. But it is not so simple with Mr. Jarrell. Since he has no method but intelligence, it is unlikely that he will have a school of followers.

To try to reproduce this critic's enjoyment in other words than his own would be a dull task. The chapter on Whitman strikes me as being a masterpiece of sympathetic criticism; the pages on "The Obscurity of the Poet" and "The Age of Criticism" set forth problems which are

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crucial and, without undue optimism, affirm the necessity of poetry. In his "Verse Chronicle," writing of the anthologists, Mr. Jarrell passes beyond criticism—at least, criticism as we have suffered it—and writes comedy. (". . . the book has the merit of containing a considerably larger selection of Oscar Williams' poems than I have ever seen in any other anthology. There are nine of his poems—and five of Hardy's. It takes a lot of courage to like your own poetry almost twice as well as Hardy's.")

Poetry and the Age may not start a revolution in criticism. If, as the author points out, no one will wake up in our time and find himself famous for having written a poem, neither will anyone for having written a book about poetry. But the attitude toward the art of poetry implicit in the following statement is so far removed from recent attitudes, and so far preferable for the poet and the ordinary intelligent reader, that we can only hope it becomes current: "A good poet is someone who manages, in a lifetime of standing out in thunderstorms, to be struck by lightning five or six times. . . ." Perhaps, after all, the age of criticism will be followed by a time of inspiration:

> And we, who have always thought of happiness climbing, would feel the emotion that almost startles when happiness falls.

### **Brief Comments**

THE NEW ENGLAND MIND: From Colony to Province. By Perry Miller. Harvard. \$6.50.

In part a continuation and in part a companion to Mr. Miller's earlier work also entitled *The New England Mind*, this erudite and well-written book is as much a guide to its predecessor as it is to the intellectual activity of the Puritans in colonial New England. That it will satisfy and serve many people is inevitable. The historian, philosopher, theologian, even the sociologist—all will find facts and interpre-

tations of interest and value. His study, Mr. Miller says, "is chiefly valuable for its representative quality: it is a case history of the accommodation to the American landscape of an imported and highly a culated system of ideas." Certainly the Pu tans are a special case, and whether or not an analysis of them provides a "working model for American history" is debatable. Vast in scope and precise in detail, the book will remain an unparalleled guide to the mind of a people whose motives and activities can receive no more careful study or clearer presentation than this definitive book. Future historians will have to accept Mr. Miller's work as the plinth upon which much of American intellectual history must rest.

THORSTEIN VEBLEN: A Critical Interpretation. By David Riesman. Scribner's. \$3.00.

This is by far the best short book on 🔽 Veblen and his work that has yet appeared. Mr. Riesman, by pay roll designation a sociologist, is able to deal professionally with all the disciplines over which Veblen's mind and pen were disposed to range. The result is a series of penetrating essays on Veblen's economics (including in particular his central thesis on the conflict between the businessmen as moneymakers and the engineers and technicians as producers): the immortal disquisition on the leisure class; Veblen's views on education and contemporary affairs; and his excursions into anthropology and biology. The phrase "series of essays" should perhaps be emphasized, for the book lacks something in continuity. It is also a bit too heavily preoccupied with the psychological motivations of Veblen. However, it is a penetrating and incisive exercise, and it avoids the common error of supposing that because Veblen was the most original of American social scientists, he was also the most influential and the most nearly infallible.

THE WORLDLY PHILOSOPHERS: The Lives, Times and Ideas of the Great Economic Thinkers. By Robert L. Heilbroner. Simon & Schuster. \$5.00.

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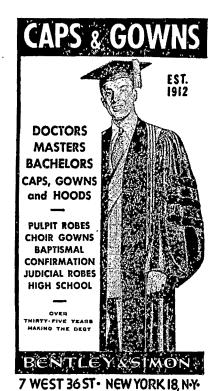
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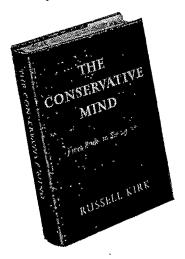
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on matters that are of little importance, although there may be fun in the activity and even a pious hope that a drop will be squeezed out of the highly abstract orange which will throw light on economic anatomy and pathology. This book will do more for economics than the lifetime work of many distinguished professors of economics. For Heilbroner, who earned a summa in economics at Harvard and has had several years of graduate work, is endowed with a genius for picking out the essential ideas of the great economists, and presenting them not only so effectively that anyone can understand them, but so interestingly that once the book is picked up, it is almost impossible to put it down.

AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. Edited by Merle Curti. With essays by Merle Curti, Louis Wirth, W. Stull Holt, René Wallak, Walter R. Agard, Arthur E. Murphy. Harvard. \$4.50.

This volume is one of a series on various phases of life and culture in the United States, planned by the Committee on American Civilization of the Library of Congress under the direction of Ralph Henry Gabriel. The fields of knowledge covered are the social sciences, history, literature, classics and philosophy. An introductory study by the editor undertakes to relate the changing tendencies of scholarly activity to those of our civilization as a whole. The effort throughout is to present the achievements of American scholars in clear perspective and with balanced judgment. Written as they are by men who are themselves involved in the movements they describe, the essays show a varying degree of commitment to special points of view.

THE SERMONS OF JOHN DONNE. Edited with introductions and critical apparatus by Evelyn M. Simpson and George R. Potter. Volume VI. California. \$7.50.

This volume, the next to be published after Volume I, contains eighteen sermons from Donne's middle period, some of them among his best. One sermon, that preached before Charles I after the death of James, has hitherto been available only in the rare quarto edition. Number 18 contains a mem-

orable religious and ethical accounting of the terrible experience of the plague. Number 2 is a reflection, the more interesting for being indirect, of Donne's own great sickness of 1624. The literary characterization of these masterpieces in the introduction, and the editorial treatment generally, continue to be of the highest quality.

MAKERS OF THE AMERICAN TRADITION SERIES: ANDREW JACKSON, by Harold C. Syrett; ROGER WILLIAMS, by Perry Miller; BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, by I. Bernard Cohen. Bobbs-Merrill. \$3.00 each.

The first three volumes to appear in this remarkable new series are interesting enough in themselves. Because they forecast an intelligent and persuasive approach to a publishing problem, their importance is increased. As the fashion of "collected works" disappears (because of the high cost of publishing), it is increasingly difficult for ordinary readers to have access to important writing in American history. The Bobbs-Merrill series solves the problem. Each volume contains enough biographical material about its subject to give the reader a fair notion of his life, informed running comment by a competent specialist, and a sufficient selection of the writings of the man in question to make clear his contribution to American thought.

The Franklin in this series is able, but, despite the claims made for it as presenting novel views, does not substantially alter the image of Franklin. The Jackson is somewhat more remarkable, in that most of us had not suspected intellectual dignity to establish him as a practical philosopherstatesman. The Roger Williams is a little jewel of a book. Professor Perry Miller excerpts and modernizes Williams' fantastic prose, and succeeds in brief compass in reinterpreting Williams. The reinterpretation is a double one; the reader not only gets the first clear view of Williams' intellectual significance in his own time, but he also has a much better notion of Williams' significance for the present day.

The typographical aspect of the series is gracious, the editorial work first-class, and the scholarly writing lucid and cogent.

THE PAPERS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON.
Volume VII. Edited by Julian P. Boyd.
Illustrated. Princeton. \$10.00.

The latest volume of the most ambitious scholarly undertaking now in progress in the United States covers less than a year: March 2, 1784, to February 25, 1785. Jesterson was concluding his legislative career and beginning his diplomatic. Since his mission to Europe was not the most successful phase of his life, it is the peripheral materials here that stand out in interest, although not necessarily in importance. But whether Jefferson is discussing balloons with Philip Turpin, devising a decimal system of coinage, or pioneering in the use of the questionnaire as he prepares for his Paris post, the editing continues to be complete and inspired.

THE BONANZA TRAIL: Ghost Towns and Mining Camps of the West. By Muriel Sibell Wolle. Illustrated. Indiana. \$8.50.

Over seventy thousand miles of back-road explorations and interviews have resulted in a study of the development and present condition of mining towns in twelve states, symbols of the boom days when prospectors sought gold in the Western streams and mountains. Maps, a glossary of mining terms and over a hundred contemporary sketches of towns and town sites make this handsome book a practical guide for travelers, a store of valuable information for Americana enthusiasts, and a source of pleasure for all who would better understand America's Western heritage.

THE BIG PICTURE. By David Cort. Bobbs-Merrill. \$3.50.

This is a delightfully unhackneyed, things-in-general book by a former Time-Life writer who has begun to brood about the universe. Everything from the Kinsey report to the latest cosmology gets in, and the author seems to hope that some of the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle are beginning to fit together. Much curious information and a good deal of fresh common sense, all well spiced with heresies, result in a briskly readable and highly entertaining book.

FROM LENIN TO MALENKOV: The History of World Communism. By Hugh Seton-Watson. Praeger. \$6.00.

The impact of the Communist movement on the outside world and of the outside world on it is the subject of this useful but somewhat mistitled book, less than a quarter of which deals with the Soviet Union or leaders. The author, son of one of Britain's most distinguished scholars in the Slavonic field, calls his point of view "post-Marxist"; he is strongly anti-Communist and leans heavily on ex-Communist sources. His book is useful chiefly as a compilation of facts in a field where they are hard to come by; they range from Java to Chile but include, curiously, no mention of communism in the United States.

THE WORLD BETWEEN THE WARS: From the 1918 Armistice to the Munich Agreement. By Quincy Howe. Illustrated. Simon & Schuster. \$7.50.

This is the second volume of Howe's A World History of Our Times. The author describes nothing less than everything that happened. His emphasis is on events rather than causes, and he is more reliable and at home in politics than in science, literature and ideas. His orientation is liberal without being rigidly schematic. Profusely illustrated, covering events and personalities in every part of the world, the book is impressively detailed and remarkably readable. Yet at the end, after the whole tragic story is told, we see how the twentieth century got into its present mess, but not why.

THE SPIRIT OF ST. LOUIS. By Charles A. Lindbergh. Illustrated. Scribner's. \$5.00.

Here is the first true and complete story of one of the most thrilling adventures of our time: Charles Lindbergh's own account of his nonstop airplane passage from New York to Paris. It is also the story of the early days of aviation and the men who made it into a science and an industry.

Scenes from his childhood and barnstorming youth help portray the man full-length;

but the climax, told in remarkably effective language, is the flight itself, from the dream through the months of preparation to the lonely, tense, triumphant hours over the dark and pathless sea.

THE SELECTED LETTERS OF LORD BYRON. Edited with an introduction by Jacques Barzun. Farrar, Straus & Young. \$3.75.

Lord Byron, who has come down to us in a Romantic cloud, stands revealed by these letters as a disciplined and practical man. An orphan, too poor to merge easily with the station in life to which he was entitled, and a cripple in the bargain, Byron soon learned how to make the most of circumstances. What infuriated his contemporaries more than his behavior was his contempt of the cant in which such behavior was usually cloaked. Byron's letters are good reading, especially when he is talking of horse trading or publishers' terms. Those affairs of the heart which have been thought to be his main interest seem rather to have been interruptions in a career.

LÉLIA: The Life of George Sand. By André Maurois. Translated from the French by Gerard Hopkins. Illustrated. Harper. \$5.00.

To the long list of men who have loved and admired George Sand can now be added the name of André Maurois, for this excellent biography is clearly a work of deep and intense devotion. This is not to say that Maurois offers excuses for or detailed explanations of the woman who, according to Flaubert, "will remain one of the splendours of France." Rather, he allows her to speak for herself through carefully chosen passages from her *Histoire de ma Vie*, her novels, letters and journals, as well as those of her contemporaries.

It is one of the ironies of literature that over seventy-five years after her death, this biography of Sand—a study in the imperfections of love—should be written with a tenderness and patience which would have meant much to her during her lifetime.

KATHERINE MANSFIELD: A Biography. By Antony Alpers. Illustrated. Knopf. \$5.00.

Mr. Alpers, himself a native New Zealander and writer, describes from firsthand observation the social and physical environment in which Katherine Mansfield grew up. Although she rebelled against her family and the rigid mores or and left her homeland for England and the Continent in her late teens, many of her stories derive from her youthful impressions of New Zealand and her own family experiences. Although Mr. Alpers has fully explored these connections, the paradoxical personality of Katherine Mansfield is best revealed in the quotations from her own writings. While Mr. Alpers' analyses are not always convincing, nor his hypotheses as to "what might have been" pertinent, he has written a fresh, sympathetic and very readable biography.

TOLSTOY: A Life of My Father. By Alexandra Tolstoy. Translated from the Russian by Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood. Illustrated. Harper. \$5.00.

Leo Tolstoy's beloved daughter and disciple Alexandra adds a contribution of unique value to the literature on the great novelist, social prophet and religious philosopher. In addition to her personal recollections of her father and of life at Yasnaya Polyana, the author draws on her thorough familiarity with the diaries and papers of Tolstoy (she was his secretary during the last decade of his life) to give a well-rounded and objective study of the man. Although her treatment of the stormy relationship of her parents is not impartial, it shows an attempt at fairness and balance.

PURPLE PASSAGE: The Life of Mrs. Frank Leslie. By Madeleine B. Stern. Illustrated. Oklahoma. \$3.75.

This first study of Miriam Florence Follin Peacock Squier Leslie Wilde, Baroness de Bazus—one of the most glittering personalities of nineteenth-century America—is based on research so copious and detailed that it is likely to be the last. If the writing itself is a bit too effusive and gay at times, the reader

is satisfied that this is the manner in which the subject would have wanted her story told. In fact, there is little question but that Mrs. Leslie would have tried to hire Miss Stern for one of her numerous publications.

PERIOD PIECE. By Gwen Raverat. Illustrated Norton. \$3.75.

In a brief preface to these recollections of her earliest years, the granddaughter of Charles Darwin warns the reader that "This is a circular book . . . all going on at the same time. . . ." The fourteen chapters of well-ordered confusion which follow are punctuated by the author's highly person alized drawings. Mrs. Raverat is a pleasant companion for reminiscing. Although life in the Darwin household was secure and stimulating, she does not brood over the good old days. Indeed, she concludes, "Oldear, Oh dear, how horrid it was being young, and how nice it is being old and no having to mind what people think."

ART IN THE ICE AGE: Spanish Levant Arr Arctic Art. By Johannes Maringer and Hand Georg Bandi in execution of a plan by Hug-Obermaier. Translated by Robert Aller Praeger. \$12.50.

An exciting book in which the prehitoric art of the Ice Age in Europe, the Span ish Levant and the Arctic has been hand somely reproduced, a great deal of it fo the first time, with an admirably informa tive text. It is a striking thing, as these cay pictures show, that aside from the beaut of the carvings and the yellow, red, blac and brown paintings, the postures an limbs of fast-traveling mammoths, bisor horses, stags and boars are of a correctne and realism never attained by the Egy tians, the Greeks, or in the Renaissance. I fact, after Ice Age man, nobody compre hended the footwork of a running anima until our own recent examples of instant neous photography.

MAKING A POEM: An Inquiry into the Creative Process. By Melville Cane. Harcour Brace. \$2.95.

In this age of wordy, functional "how to

ectures, articles and books, it is extremely bleasant to pick up a small, amiable volume uch as this one. For as Mr. Cane points out in his introduction, "I have no wish to mpose my views on others or to dogmatize on how poetry should be written.... I am to authority except for myself." This candid recounting of his experiences and houghts while writing makes this study timulating and helpful both for those who write poetry and those who read it.

ROTHER TO DRAGONS. By Robert Penn Warren. Random House. \$3.50.

This "Tale in Verse and Voices" tells low, on a night in December, 1811, in West Centucky, the brothers Lewis dismembered . Negro slave on a chopping block. Lilburn Lewis is the evil genius; Isham, his awed .ccomplice. Lilburn, grieved by his mother's leath, broods over the stealing of spoons y the slaves, which he regards as a violaion of her grave. The murder follows. When it is detected, the brothers agree to hoot each other. Lilburn is killed, as he lanned; Isham survives, to fight and die at he Battle of New Orleans. There are tretches of evocative poetry in the story, out the reader who is unwilling to assimilate he author's concern with Evil, or to feel hat the Southern landscape in itself invests rime with grandeur, may not be moved by he characters or the action.

EN BURNT OFFERINGS. By Louis MacNeice. Oxford. \$2.50.

Mr. MacNeice was inspired to write these oems during his stay in Greece. They re a poet's challenge to an unpoetic age, affirming those aesthetic and spiritual alues which neither science nor mechanizaton can supplant. The poems range in abject from the death of a cat to the aradox of a saint's faith, from contemlating the significance of time to rhapsoizing on love. Mr. MacNeice has experi-

mented with new and fresh forms in his ten "burnt offerings." They sparkle with pungent literary allusions and are exciting in their rhythmic versatility and power.

THE ADVENTURES OF AUGIE MARCH. By Saul Bellow. Viking. \$4.50.

This big novel might be subtitled "Going at Things Free-Style." The orphaned Augie is nourished on the swarm of Chicago tenement life. He becomes the confidant of Einhorn, a crippled commercial genius; is nearly adopted by a wealthy lady; accompanies a neurotic divorcée to Mexico, where they train an eagle to hunt giant lizards; marries the beautiful Stella; and almost ends up at the bottom of the sea. But Augie always manages to escape from doubtful blessings. Security is baneful to his intelligence, and he retains a happy innocence which—together with the liberties the author takes with probability—makes this a comedy in the grand manner. There are faults of construction, and the rhetoric sometimes palls, but from now on, any discussion of American novelists will have to reckon with Mr. Bellow.

TOO LATE THE PHALAROPE. By Alan Paton. Scribner's. \$3.50.

Enacted to the tones of Paton's heavy Biblical prose, the structure and plot of this powerful chronicle of destruction are deceptively simple. Far more than an explanation of an individual conscience and its conflict, this is the story of the dilemma of many people. Only the reader who accepts this novel as being written about and within the context of Malan's South Africa will find the full measure of depth in each character and situation. This may prove to be the weakness of the book. However, at this time it is enough that Paton's soft voice is still the most commanding to rise above the furious noise of South Africa or any other area in which crucial battles of racism are being waged.

# The Reader Replies . . .

THE READER REPLIES carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles which have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor, The AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Phi Beta Kappa Hall, Williamsburg, Va., and should not exceed 300 words in length except on request. Because of limitations of space, we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.—EDITOR.

### A Case of Identity

In his article in the Summer issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, entitled "The Life and Death of Words," Mr. Dwight L. Bolinger speaks of the Neo-Humboldtians as being so named after "the great nineteenth-century Baron von Humboldt, pioneer in geology, terrestrial magnetism, botany and anthropology, in addition to the study of language."

As there were two brothers, Alexander and Wilhelm von Humboldt, both barons and both scientists, and as, except for his editing, in 1886 in collaboration with Dr. Buschmann, his brother's unfinished study of the Kawi language of Java, Alexander's name is not otherwise associated with linguistic studies, I strongly suspect a misapprehension here.

Of the two, Wilhelm is certainly the one who acquired a reputation as a philologist by pointing out in the deservedly famous introduction to his study of the Kawi language that what counts in language is the "innere Form," of which the material structure of language is only the outward manifestation. This introduction rapidly became the foundation for a new, if at first slightly lambent, conception of language.

I hasten to observe that there has always obtained, even on the periphery of scientific circles, a certain confusion as to the identity of Wilhem von Humboldt, who, on account of his lesser output, was frequently slighted in favor of his brother.

PAUL-LOUIS FAYE
University of Colorado
Boulder, Colorado

No alibis. Reader Faye is absolutely

right. I confused the edited with his edited brother; and Karl Wilhelm, no less cele brated than Alexander, but more in publi life and less in science, was the spiritual leader of the Humboldtians in language.

> DWIGHT L. BOLINGE University of Southern Californi Los Angeles, Californi

#### In the Best Traditions

Too rarely do we find a magazine whic calls our political and intellectual inad quacies to our attention, supplies informing and entertaining articles, and leaves the reader with his intellectual self-respect. You The American Scholar more than fulfil these needs. The months between the a rival of new issues are considerably brightened by the presence of material which make read many times with increasing enjoinent.

I would like to cite especially three are cles and one regular feature which, in mopinion, have been in the best tradition of the magazine. The articles were Josep Wood Krutch's "The Loss of Confidence Fritz Machlup's "Do Economists Kno Anything?" and Archibald MacLeish "Loyalty and Freedom." The feature which defies all efforts to heap adequate prail upon it is, of course, Irwin Edman's commentary. But other articles, too numerous to name, are in the same class as these.

I sincerely hope that you will contine in the path you have chosen for yourselve and which is so deeply appreciated by you readers.

> ROBERT M. KAUFMA New York, New Yor

### More About Loyalty Oaths

Mr. Willard De Yoe's letter in the Sumner, 1953, edition of The American Scholar is an appeal for conformity. I have been in the Army nearly a year and luring this time have been told what to year, whom to salute, how to make my bed and where to keep my socks and underwear. The orders may be logical enough in most instances, and of course everything is done or "my own good." But they are orders, nevertheless. They insult my intelligence and personal habits. In short, they have leprived me of my freedom and pressed ne into conformity.

The loyalty oath is like the salute in the army. You acknowledge your allegiance to symbol, an organization, a group. If I am oyal to America, my loyalty is in my heart. don't need to pledge; I don't have to be orced to be loyal. If I am not, no amount f force is going to make me. I can salute nd sign oaths to exhaustion, but they mean ittle when there is no feeling behind them. lommunists would be the last persons to void an oath. Indeed, it would create a alse sense of security on the part of those tho demand such allegiance, for they think hey have friends when in reality they have reacherous enemies.

If I am loyal to God, I need not pledge be keep the Ten Commandments. I will do of my own free will, Mr. De Yoe. I might ake the liberty to suggest a change in your entence, from: "If a person is loyal to God, am puzzled why he or she would refuse be pledge to keep the Ten Commandments" o: "If a person is loyal to God, I am puzled why he or she would need to pledge to eep the Ten Commandments."

EDWARD JAY Fort Ord, California

### Loss of Confidence

There is much, very much, to be said for ne ideas expressed by Dr. Krutch in his say "The Loss of Confidence" [AS: Spring, 953]. It is lamentable that man has learned ow to split the atom when he has processed in the study of his nature just to the

point where he realizes his certain animal and mechanical qualities, just to the point where he realizes that he is more emotion than intellect. "The intellect is a speck upon a sea of feeling." And such meager understanding of human nature could be destructive if we allowed fear to paralyze our minds because of the knowledge of what our hands can do.

But who is afraid? The scientists? The heads of nations? Both are busy: one with nature, the other with strategy. The more the former know of nature, the more the latter must concern themselves with strategic defenses. It is the great mass of us, who only sit on the merry-go-round, who are frightened. An atom blast somewhere in the Soviet Union is felt in a Maryland schoolroom where children almost daily practice "taking cover."

Therefore, the scientists must say, "Men, do not fear. I have given you weapons to destroy yourself but you, nevertheless, are capable of making your own decisions." And the heads of nations must say, "Our cities are secure so long as we obtain that atoll, three thousand miles across the sea, for a bombing base. But, as always, we will keep our powder dry."

What of the little man who has lost confidence, the little "worrying animal," always concerned for his home, his family, his bread, and now afraid for his life and his unborn generation?

You have said, Dr. Krutch, "The road back is not an easy one." But there is no road, not even a path. Fear is made by headlines, not by laboratory experimentalists who have found something in common between man and the rat. On such analogy, the mass of men have not been sold. And while some of them may have read Wells or Shaw, they simply read a corking good story.

So I speak for the little "worrying animal," who must find his succor in the happy "treason of Beria" and the split down the Soviet middle. Thomas Wolfe once asked why we must batten on the blood of our brother. Show me another way, for I would kneel at the tomb of Socrates.

GORDON HIMELFARB Washington, D. C.

# THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

VOLUME 23 Spring, 1954 NUMBER 2

# A Modest Proposal for the Care and Use of Subversives

#### ALAN VALENTINE

Our great democracy is known by all right-minded men to be only a little short of perfection. Only the faults of other nations and the infiltration of foreign ideas have delayed our achievement of the ideal society. The existence within our boundaries of un-American thought and activities is one of those temporary flaws derived from the influences to which our generosity in Europe and Asia has exposed us. But though the problem came from overseas, its solution must be in the American spirit of freedom, and how to detect and deal with subversives is troubling and dividing American society.

More penetrating minds than my own have wrestled with this problem in the halls of Congress and elsewhere, and it is only a fortunate accident which enables me to offer a constructive solution. After wearying myself for many months with vain, idle and visionary speculations upon this subject, I happily recalled a proposal made in 1729 by the Dean of St. Patrick's to solve a difficult problem in Ireland. An overproduction of Irish babies was resulting in an Irish form of technological unemployment called wholesale starvation. Thinking in extraordinarily modern economic con-

② ALAN VALENTINE, former president of the University of Rochester, has served as chief of the Economic Cooperation Administration Mission to the Netherlands, administrator of Economic Stabilization, president of the Committee for Free Asia, and chairman of the National Survey of Medical Education.

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cepts, Dean Swift proposed that instead of a futile battle with the procreative propensities of the Irish, their productive talents be given incentive payments by offering parents a good price for their babies—if well nurtured and succulent—who would then provide an added delicacy to the tables of their landlords.

The genius of the suggestion was that it would turn a national problem into a national asset, adding to the pleasure and profit of everyone—parents and consumers alike. Approaching our own problem of subversives in that ingenious and lofty spirit, I have arrived at a happy solution. Since my plan is aimed at efficient use of our manpower (a primary aim of American democracy), it cannot be condemned as original and hence undemocratic. Indeed, it is merely a logical extension of the ideas and procedures of our present leading exponents of Americanism, especially those of our greatest defender of the narrow faith, our valiant Torquemada of tall corn, the Senator whose passion for investigation knows no bounds.

By observing him I have come to see the issue more clearly and to realize that the subversive is only one example of the failure of American society to achieve full unity of ideas and convictions. It is true that we are of late making substantial progress in that direction, for the newer methods of education, advertising and security investigation are helping us win the fight toward the full mental uniformity of all free men. Good citizens are recognizing that deference to popular opinion is their highest civic virtue, that he who questions the wisdom of the majority is unworthy of their tolerance, that private doubts cannot be harbored in democratic society. But there still remain, alas, intransigent reactionaries devoted to an outworn liberal tradition; there are still some selfopinionated descendants of Voltaire and Thomas Paine, and our universities still give asylum to perverse professors who are confirmed addicts of independent thought. Were it not for them, the nation might already have attained full cerebral standardization.

Unfortunately the problem has become newly complicated by a reluctance to insist upon mental conformity simply because Russia has done so. Our intelligent public is only beginning to see that if conformity has made Russia efficient it will make us more efficient

still, that we must be broad-minded and not ignore a virtue simply because Satan boasts it too. We must put the higher good of efficiency before the high good of differing from the Slavs. We would not be imitating them, for ours is the willing conformity of free men, not that conformity forced upon ignorant Asians who do not know its full value. If we Americans really put our hearts into it, we can easily out-conform the Russians.

If our sovereign masses have a fault (which I do not admit), it has been an overmeticulous desire for fair play. They have tried to distinguish between degrees of nonconformity and to separate political subversives from original thinkers. The generous hearts of our people have obscured their logic, for in the challenge to democratic unity there is no basic distinction between the subversive and the nonconformist. Both seek to undermine the right of the majority to determine all opinion. Just as there can be no national security if a single suspected Communist goes unharassed, so there can be no national unity if any man is allowed to challenge the standard ideology of free men. When the president of Harvard rejects the wisdom of Senatorial advice as to how to administer Harvard, he corrupts majority ethics just as much as if he had invoked the Fifth Amendment.

We must make a broader definition of subversion that will include all nonconformists. This will save us from present bickering, uncertainty and government expense. But we must go further and act upon that definition in a nation-wide Crusade of the People. We cannot hope that a mere handful of devoted and farseeing patriots in Congress can alone track down and ruthlessly stamp out every original idea, or every association with any man who ever had one. No, the thought control essential to national unity demands a national organization. It should operate outside the courts, for experience has shown that free men can best destroy opposition to unity of thought if they are not subject to legal conventions. It must be a grass-roots movement in which every man shall take responsibility for the conformity of all the rest. That is the essence of our modern democracy, and men whose ancestors left their plows and tapped their powder horns must now leave their television sets and tap their neighbors' wires. Already, patriotic

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little groups are springing up, armed with suspicion and subpoenas and eager to accuse their neighbors of un-Americanism. This movement could go far.

Just as the definition of the subversive must be made more all-inclusive, the modern doctrine of guilt by association should be extended. In matters of conformity, every citizen must be like Caesar's wife. Independent ideas can be driven out only if those who are suspected of harboring them are put into Coventry by every right-thinking conformist and if the penalty for association with nonconformists is automatic and drastic. Subversives would then be able to talk and live only with other subversives, and would thus be easier to identify.

The American treatment of suspected subversives has been legally circumspect. In their desire to see that no injustice is done, Congressional committees are as scrupulous as the Inquisitors of the Middle Ages. If the medieval suspect could walk on red-hot plowshares without being burned, he was declared innocent. If the accused before the modern committee can emerge from the fire of investigation without injury to health, reputation or spirit, he may rejoin society. The modern ordeal protects society more carefully than the plowshare, for the accused man's chance of emerging unscathed is a little less good, and if he does so the committee still takes no position on his innocence. The committees also temper their justice with mercy and follow the most modern sociological humanitarianism. Minor offenders against uniformity of opinion are regarded as mentally unwell rather than deliberately vicious. Their mild penalties are meant to be corrective, with the hope that they can ultimately purge themselves of all original thought and return to membership in civilized society. Committees do not resort to Communist brain-washing; they leave such correctives to the gentle, informal influences of a conformist society.

All this has been progress, but my proposals face the issue more realistically. It is not likely that many of these sick men will ever throw off entirely the infection of intellectual independence, for its virus has been tolerated for generations in the blood stream of the body politic. Its victims are not normal citizens and cannot be permitted to circulate and spread their contagion among healthy

#### A MODEST PROPOSAL FOR THE CARE AND USE OF SUBVERSIVES

men. Until their local loyalty boards pronounce them fully cured, they must be designated second-class citizens. Obviously their right to vote must be withdrawn. Their type of employment must be regulated; their homes and families must be segregated. This is necessary not only to prevent their contaminating their neighbors but to maintain real-estate values in the better neighborhoods. Intermarriage between their children and those of first-class citizens must of course be banned.

At first it seemed to me that such mental invalids should not be permitted to reproduce their kind and thus jeopardize the welfare of future free society. But here I encountered practical difficulties. The emotions of youth are powerful in these matters, and no measure short of the sterilization of all second-class citizens under seventy would be sufficiently effective. Yet this would offend our sense of justice, for the door must be left open to their possible return (remote though it may be) to the privileges of full citizenship, of which unlicensed reproduction is at present one. Science has not yet developed a sure means of the temporary sterilization of an un-co-operative young man, and I am therefore obliged to postpone this recommendation until our biologists have solved the problem.

Meanwhile, the situation can be kept in hand. Since most of our subversives are intellectuals, who are notoriously poor breeders, the magnitude of the danger is somewhat diminished. Moreover, the incomes of suspected subversives will naturally become small and their living conditions subnormal. Their children, we can with confidence assume, will be inferior in attractiveness to the other sex, and their financial capacity to pursue courtship under American mating standards will be inadequate. Their low nutrition (I am assured by a distinguished doctor who has long studied the effects of inadequate diet on fruit flies) can be depended upon to make them below average in reproductive capacity. They and their children will be associating with first-class citizens of the vulnerable age only under restrictions like those informally established for Chinese, Jews and Negroes. Our society has already demonstrated its capacity to deal with inferior citizens of other races, and should have no trouble in controlling subversives and nonconformists along traditional lines.

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But since these second-class citizens will not be recognized as easily as earlier segregated groups by their color, accents or features (indeed, a few of them are surprisingly normal in appearance), some distinguishing mark must be placed upon them. I had first thought they should all be required to wear some distinctive uniform. We have found this an effective way of identifying convicts, but the striped regalia of Sing Sing is effective only within narrow limits or prison walls, and is discarded with celerity when opportunity permits. Our numerous nonconformists cannot be thus confined and watched without great expense to society; and to dress them as we dress convicts would be rightly resented by the latter, since thieves and murderers, in spite of their legal peccadilloes, are often completely loyal and unoriginal citizens. On practical grounds, as well as in fairness to our criminal class, I was obliged to discard my plan of a compulsory uniform for subversives. This decision greatly disappointed my dear wife, who, forgetting the object in view, had drawn sketches of an all-too-fetching ensemble in red for female subversives.

Turning to the wisdom of the East, I recalled that India has had her own untouchables, who wear special marks upon their fore-heads. At first this seemed a perfect solution, but again objections arose. India's present leaders say they have abolished the caste system. At a time when friendship with Asians is sought on any terms, we would be undiplomatic to imitate a custom officially nonexistent and possibly on the decline. We must do nothing that would shake the faith of Asians in our moral leadership. But I have hit upon another scheme that will please the common man, and must therefore be the right one. The plan is not perfect, for it is not completely inflexible, but it will serve both to brand present subversives and to discourage future ones.

Our democratic society has tolerated within itself an organization of dubious value and intent. It sets its members apart from the rest of society by a devotion to the intellectual. It professes standards higher than the popular ones, and looks down upon the mental attitudes of nonthinking good citizens. It has deliberately encouraged humanism without regard to its danger to the mechanical efficiency of democracy. It has fostered research in fields where

new ideas can only be disruptive of established convictions. In the single stroke I propose, this organization could be properly discredited and second-class citizens appropriately branded. I therefore recommend that every man and woman, from the moment that his or her orthodoxy is first called into question, be compelled to wear conspicuously, at all hours of the day and night, the square golden key of the Phi Beta Kappa Society. Mindful of the need to cut down the costs of government, this recommendation is attractive as an economy measure. Society would be relieved of most of the costs of these keys by the fact that many of the accused already possess them.

The proper punitive measure should not only protect society from its subversives but make them useful to it. We must respect the efficiency of the Russians, for though slave labor camps may not appeal to us, they have turned Russia's political opponents into economic assets. We should adopt their principle while we deplore their method. After all, the only reasonable objections of free men to the Russian solution are that it undercuts the just wages of labor by unpaid competition, and that it makes use only of the muscles of subversives, which are usually below par, and neglects to utilize their mental abilities, which are sometimes surprisingly normal. America can find a more efficient way, and at minimum cost to the state. There is one profession which is almost perfectly adapted to our need for some useful punitive service. Its members are already segregated from the rest of society; they are demonstrably devoid of new and dangerous ideas; they serve a minor but useful function; and they are paid at society's lowest rates. I refer of course to our schoolteachers.

Our second-class subversives could wisely be sentenced to the teaching of American youth. In that function their physical limitations would be the smallest handicap, and their intellectual interest of some slight value if properly restricted. Teaching in the schools would set them apart from first-class citizens: their low wages would isolate them economically, and their tendency to cerebrate would make them undesirable socially. Society could thus get all this necessary hack work done at the usual low cost, which could be still further reduced if that could be done and some

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degree of life and vigor still sustained. Present teachers not themselves accused of unorthodoxy could then assume other low-level work previously done by the subversives—such as diplomacy, public service, research and the arts—or would be freed to aspire to the wages and social standing of plumbers and subway guards.

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To some, this proposal might seem unwise, for there is a vestigial opinion that schoolteachers are influential and that their characters should be impeccable. The most superficial investigation will prove this tradition to be an outworn fallacy. A retired superintendent of schools in a large Eastern city, now happily engaged as a houseman and chauffeur in a very respectable home in Greenwich, Connecticut, assures me that in his long educationist experience he has never known a successful American businessman to give serious weight to the opinions of a schoolteacher. He is, of all people, the one whom boys and girls are least likely to believe or imitate. Nowhere else in society would our subversives offer less danger of contaminating our youth. They would not, of course, be allowed to coach athletics, for in that capacity they would influence our future leaders; and it might be necessary to exclude them from the sciences, in which many young people are interested. But in the routine drudgery of the liberal arts and social studies they could be of no possible danger.

Further safeguards could be set up if desired. No second-class citizen would be allowed to become a principal or superintendent, for such men are influential because they deal with budgets and are paid more than an intellectual with an original mind could be worth. Each teacher could be held responsible for the docility of all the rest, a democratic device already used in the schools and enhanced by the brilliant concept of guilt by association. Of course no subversives would be allowed to write for publication or to make speeches outside the classroom. The single exception would be in the case of approved confessions of earlier unorthodoxy.

Although a few of our subversives might have no qualifications to teach or no interest in youth, this has already been found to be no handicap to schoolteachers. The cost of education would be reduced; subversives would be properly identified and segregated; their work would be its own punishment; and the society of first-

#### A MODEST PROPOSAL FOR THE CARE AND USE OF SUBVERSIVES

class citizens would gain unity by the elimination of any who questioned the ideas established by the chairmen of Congressional committees on Americanism. The current shortage of teachers could be readily remedied, for if more were needed in any community, its local loyalty board need only broaden its definition of subversion to recruit additional ones.

I confess to some pride in having hit upon this fair, cheap and easy method of making our subversives useful members of the commonwealth while at the same time emasculating them for the propagation of iconoclasm. The measures I propose would result in the founding of a powerful new federal agency which might reasonably be headed by him who conceived them. Nothing is further from my ambitions, for those who know me know my modesty, which has always partly obscured my talents. It is not the American Way to push oneself forward or to confuse public welfare with private interest. I leave with confidence to the sense of gratitude of my fellow-citizens the determination of the capacity in which I might serve this great cause.

Some may think my proposed treatment of subversives too soft: to them I can only reply that it is better to be too lenient than to risk the slightest injustice to individuals or impairment of the spirit of personal freedom. The maintenance of our Bill of Rights must always be our paramount concern. But I am not so violently bent upon my own opinions as to reject any suggestions for their improvement, provided they come from unimpeachable sources. A humble deference to the opinions of his fellows is the mark of a free man.

# POEMS

## by melville cane

#### Above and Below

Bereft of speech, debarred from words, Despite, the underprivileged birds Explore the octaves of the sky With metric sweep, with rhythmic cry, Carolling to earthly ears The earthless cadence of the spheres.

While far below, the songless cows Forever munch, forever browse, Forever heave their heavy girth Inexorably bound to earth, And out of patient moos and lows Compose their paragraphs of prose.

### by david morton

### Something . . . At Night

It is not rain—he knows the sound of rain;
This is another thing, and not good,
Not drink for roots, for grasses, thirsting, not
Water in any wise, friendly and plain,
In ways known and familiar. This is what,
At night, man cannot name—or if he could
Would not, lest, in the stillness, the thing hear,
And come, like a thing called, into the room,
Immense and monstrous, evil, and too near,
And known, at last, as self, the explicit doom.

It was a small thing in himself, ignored
And left to pasture on the innocent, sweet
Herbs of the succulent summers... May the Lord
Have mercy on us, listening to the feet
Nearing the room from the great dark, a sound
That knows—none better—where we may be found:

The man himself coming to find himself,
Who cannot hide, longer, beneath the covers:
Not behind masks, not in narcotic pages
Of any book he reaches from the shelf
—Romancing poets and deluded sages
Telling of the old heavens, of the happy lovers;—
No hiding, now, not even in his love,
The small and white beside him, and asleep;
Not in the Lord he prayed his soul to keep,
That was not kept... He hears the sound thereof,
Not to be named aloud, not if he could,
Something at night, and near, not rain, not good.

## by jon swan

A Wonder in the World (After Yeats, His Phoenix)

There's a woman we have seen who in a bath of gold
Turned with a mirror in her hand, turned with constant eyes
Watching her beauty, like low evening swallows that behold
Reflected heaven in a pool. Another, whose wise
Husband, wanting to keep like coin or property
The slanting smile of her gaze, was ready to pay,
That days and men might praise his choice and feel their poverty:
I know a wonder in the world so let these have their day.

America now has such production you can see a row Of women, the glory of our age, identically glow When cameras come and pop and go. And more ripe Helens grow In California's sun than old Homer with his slow Immortal pen could write into eternity. For those at home, invading loveliness in white and grey Astounds a screen, stands blistering its beauty in your eye: I know a wonder in the world so let these have their day.

There'll be that crowd of splendor: women to talk stars and flight Into the darkest hour, some making modest men capsize Security, but none to match as well my Beauty's glance, her bright Being, who holds a dawn of wonder in her April eyes, And agile laughter; the explorer's discontent and that proud gaze As though she met the burning sun for company—
Of her I sing, before this heaven's gift high-homeward strays:
I know a wonder in the world so let them have their day.

#### Concert

Not posted on the program, But intermittent heard Through windows and propriety, Some triumphant bird

Chorales before Sebastian sang; His flute before the Flood, A little company attends, But of them one is God.

Whom Shall He Welcome?

Suddenly when death decides We meet our Father in the sky; He shakes our hand, then inquires If we can fly. Some walk to him on stairs of gold, Or ride the back of people's praise, Or pay a pension up to heaven For later days,

But only one or maybe few Know such a spendthrift soul that rose From weightlessness and by surprise: He chooses those.

## by laura lake

#### Lines to a Color

Warm as children's mittens made by a grandmother, It floods the veins of geraniums along the brick wall; On the cherry table, apples swim in light, And nine steps down in the strawberry patch, cardinals Stir and feed and sing among the lime green stems. In the clovered field, a mare and a stallion clash Against a whitewashed fence, paw the air And race, electric-tailed, to summer barns; While under the shade of a holly berry tree, dances A girl with lips like wild rose haws, and in The fire of her hair burns this color I love.

## by lincoln fitzell

#### Lines to a Friend

Do you recall in Father's day, How sunlight hit the street, How big ships going down the bay, Would make us race and leap? The light was warm then after school. There were no walking dead. But now time spins a dusty spool, And chill creeps up the bed.

The same day eats the day before. We live in backward mind, Who wrestle fury at the door, For what was left behind.

- © Leading magazines have carried the articles, fiction and verse of lawyer and poet MELVILLE CANE. An article by him appeared in the Winter, 1952-53, number of The American Scholar. His latest book is *Making a Poem*.
- ② DAVID MORTON, formerly professor of English at Amherst College, is the author of some twenty volumes of prose and verse. He is now living in the Azores, where he continues to write and teach.
- O JON SWAN is on the staff of the American Friends Service Committee. These are among his first published poems; another appeared in the Winter, 1953-54, issue of The American Scholar.
- ② LAURA LAKE has studied sociology at Columbia University, painting at the Art Students' League and writing at the New School for Social Research. The Autumn, 1953, issue of The American Scholar carried another of her poems.
- © Poems by LINCOLN FITZELL, recipient of the 1937 Shelley Memorial Award, have appeared in several volumes and in many literary magazines here and abroad, including the Summer, 1953, number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

## The Practice of Biography

#### HAROLD NICOLSON

In an age when, within a few hours, men can be transported from Croydon to Khartoum; when children, seated in their own small chairs, can watch Presidents being inaugurated, atomic bombs exploding, or fish with round eyes and muslin fins circling in an aquarium; when experience has transcended imagination and reality has proved more terrible than any phantom—in such an age it is inevitable that the sense of wonder should become atrophied, that the fictional should lose its stimulus, and that people should prefer to read about what happened in the unfrightening past rather than about what may happen in our awful present or future.

The modern propensity to write and read biographies is not, however, due solely to a desire to escape from anxiety. The young men and maidens who, without possessing any compulsive creative gift, think that it would be nice to write a book, are attracted to this form of composition, since it provides them with a ready-made plot, need entail no tremendous energy of research, and enables them to relieve their sensibility without placing too taut a strain upon their imagination. The common reader, for his part, feels that in learning about the adventures, passions and misfortunes of real heroes and heroines he is indulging in no idle relaxation, but is acquiring knowledge, is "teaching himself history." That, when all is said and done, is a commendable thing to feel. For him modern fiction has become so intricate, so self-centered and so cruel that it leaves behind it an after-tone of bewilderment and distress: it is both more comforting and more instructive to read about the past. In this manner biographies accumulate and prosper.

It is noticeable also that in ages of faith, when the minds of men

© SIR HAROLD NICOLSON, diplomat and journalist, is particularly well known for his biographies of Tennyson, Byron, Swinburne, Verlaine and George V. He is also the author of *The Development of English Biography*. This article first appeared in *The Cornhill Magazine*, a quarterly publication of John Murray Ltd.

are fixed upon the eternal verities and the life after death, the practice of biography tends to decline; whereas in the succeeding periods of doubt, speculation and skepticism, the interest in human behavior increases. Thus in the fourteenth century in England, we had all the elements of good biography, whereas in the succeeding century the interest waned; in the sixteenth century again the impulse of curiosity became active and productive, only to recede with the advent of puritanism in the age that followed. Then came the eighteenth century and the phase of enlightened humanism which produced our greatest biographies; whereas with the revival of theological preoccupations in the Victorian epoch, both the demand and the supply declined. The twentieth century should have coincided with a powerful revival of pure biography, but although many books are published, it does not appear that any modern formula has as yet become established.

The ease with which biographies are written and sold today entails a danger that an art so perfectly attuned to the Anglo-Saxon temperament may become inflated. Moreover, the tendency manifested by many elderly ladies and gentlemen to publish auto-biographies—hoping thereby to recapture the security of their childhood and to demonstrate the triumph of character over environment—will still further debase this currency. It may therefore be opportune to reconsider whether there do in fact exist any fundamental biographical principles, and to examine what are the perils and illnesses to which the art of biography is by its very nature exposed.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines biography as "the history of the lives of individual men, as a branch of literature." This excellent definition contains within itself three principles that any serious biographer should observe: A biography must be "history," in the sense that it must be accurate and depict a person in relation to his times; it must describe an "individual," with all the gradations of human character, and not merely present a type of virtue or of vice; and it must be composed as "a branch of literature," in that it must be written in grammatical English and with an adequate feeling for style.

A biography combining all these three principles can be classed

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as a "pure" biography; a biography that violates any one of these principles, or combines them in incorrect proportions, must be classed as an "impure" biography. A pure biography is written with no purpose other than that of conveying to the reader an authentic portrait of the individual whose life is being narrated. A biography is rendered impure when some extraneous purpose intrudes to distort the accuracy of presentation.

Thus Voltaire's Histoire de Charles XII, although written and composed with consummate mastery, is not a pure biography in that it does not depict an individual character in relation to the background of the times. Carlyle's Life of John Sterling, although from the literary point of view his most attractive work, is impure biography since it is not very precise, not a true portrait, and written with a purpose other than that of the direct delineation of an individual. Walton's *Lives* are without question masterpieces of English prose; but they sin against the principles of biography since Walton is not describing human beings, but types of the particular form of quietism that he himself regarded as desirable. Many biographies, on the other hand, are perfectly historical, really do paint, even if with clumsy strokes, the portrait of an individual, but are so badly written that they cannot for one instant qualify as literature. A biography therefore which does not combine all three of these fundamental principles must be defined as impure.

The development of the art throughout the ages shows us how ancient and how recurrent are these "extraneous purposes" by which the purity of biography is infected. There is no better method of isolating the principles of pure biography than to trace the sources of these infections.

The original cause of all biography was the desire to commemorate the illustrious dead. A leader dies; his tribe or family feel that some strength has passed from them; they seek to perpetuate his magic by a monument. Cairns and monoliths arise; we have the regal sites of mighty pyramids; men scale the precipices and engrave a cenotaph upon the rocks of Bisitun; epics and sagas sing the legends of tribal heroes; the wrath of Achilles is rendered im-

mortal, and to this day men read with elation of the endurance and resource of Ithacan Odysseus; Balder and Beowulf come to swell the paean; the whole world echoes with the praise of famous men. With this epic strain there mingle elegies and laments. Widow-biographies are an early phenomenon: to the Complaint of Deor we add The Wife's Complaint. This commemorative instinct is bad for pure biography, since it leads the commemorator to concentrate solely upon the strength and virtue of his hero and to omit all weakness or shadow. Endemic, and sometimes epidemic, is this passion for commemoration; it has infected biography throughout the centuries.

The impulse is not primitive only; it operates to this day. It is but natural that when a great man dies, his family should desire that his life should be written in such a manner as to emphasize his nobility and to hide his faults. Even the most enlightened survivors are inclined to entrust the biography of their dead chief not to an outsider who may take too objective a view of his subject, but to some inexpert but loyal member of the family, who can be trusted to suppress all unfavorable truth. Occasionally the widow herself undertakes the task, sometimes with results as fantastic as those of Lady Burton's biography of her erratic but gifted husband. Even when an honest outsider is commissioned, he may be precluded from outspokenness by a laudable desire not to wound the susceptibilities of those to whom he is obliged. An even more curious and subtle effect of such family-inspired biographies is that the author may become influenced by the petty grievances or animosities cherished by the hero or his widow in their later years; instead of creating an impression of greatness he creates an impression of smallness. A classic instance of this unintentional diminution of a hero's character is provided by General Sir C. Callwell's Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wilson; there have been others since. The commemorative instinct assuredly operates in devious ways, but it is always perilous to pure biography.

A second extraneous purpose is the didactic purpose. People have always been tempted to take the lives of individual men as examples of virtue, or as cautionary tales indicative of the ill effects of self-indulgence or ambition. Plutarch himself, the father of

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biography, admitted that he chose his characters as types of certain virtues and vices and as examples for emulation or avoidance by the young. Yet Plutarch happened to be a natural biographer in that he was passionately interested in the way that individuals behaved; thus, although his lives of Antony or Alcibiades, for instance, were intended to be cautionary tales, he soon forgot his didactic purpose in the fascination exercised upon his mind by the splendor of Antony or the gaiety of Alcibiades. Flashes of admiration and delight illumine his pages, until both he and his readers forget entirely that an extraneous purpose of moral precept ever existed.

It is not so with other hagiographers. The lives of the saints and martyrs were not, it can be admitted, always intended to be historical accounts of individuals. Yet in more disguised form the didactic purpose continues to intrude upon biography; the desire to teach or preach, the desire to establish examples, the desire to illustrate some moral, theological, political, economic or social theory—all these irrelevant intentions infect biography with strong, and sometimes subtle, doses of impurity. The nineteenth-century biographers were most susceptible to the didactic temptation. "The history of mankind," wrote Carlyle, "is the history of its great men." "To find out these, clean the dirt from them, and to place them on their proper pedestal" appeared to him and his contemporaries a proper function of biography. This doctrine led to such impurities as The Saintly Lives Series, in which, among other worthies, Lord Tennyson was portrayed not as he was, but as the sort of laureate that the author felt he ought to be. The reaction against the hagiography of the Victorians led to a development valuable as a corrective, but, in its baser derivatives, damaging to the pure biographic stream. I refer to the introduction by Froude and his successors and imitators of the element of irony.

The satirical attitude of the biographer toward his subject may have come as a relief from the hagiography of the Victorians, but it can easily degenerate into false history and false psychology. Froude certainly provided a true picture of Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle; his portraits were condemned by his contemporaries as cynical, disloyal and in shocking bad taste. The influence of Samuel Butler

came to transform Froude's attitude of negative skepticism into positive derision of conventional legends. Lytton Strachey, with his ironical titters, emerged as the deftest of iconoclasts; yet Strachey, who enjoyed paradox more than he respected precision, and who had little sense of history, exaggerated the lights and shadows of his portraits. His sketches were certainly vivid, personal and well written; but they were not "history" in the sense that pure biography demands. In the hands of his imitators the manner of Strachey deteriorated so rapidly that it became an irritating habit of superciliousness. Philip Guedalla, with his trick of dramatic contrast, diminished the very real value of his writings by too great insistence on antithesis; his pictures became distorted and out of focus.

Irony is, in any case, a dangerous tincture and one that should be applied only with a sable brush; when daubed by vigorous arms it becomes wearisome and even offensive. It is not merely that the reader is irritated by a biographer who implies in chapter after chapter that he is himself more enlightened, sensitive, or sincere than the hero whom he is describing. It is also that biography, if taken seriously, is an exacting task and not one that can be carried through with a sneer. The drudgery of collecting and checking material, the mechanical labor of completing a long book, require an effort more continuous than can be sustained by glimpses of self-satisfaction. The biographer must be constantly fortified by a fundamental respect, or affection, for the person whom he is describing; if all that he experiences is superficial contempt, his work will turn to ashes and his energy wilt and fail. No writer can persist for five hundred pages in being funny at the expense of someone who is dead.

There are other poisons, other temptations, to which this difficult art is liable. Biography is always a collaboration between the author and his subject; always there must be the reflection of one temperament in the mirror of another. The biographer should thus be careful not to permit his own personality to intrude too markedly upon the personality that he is describing; he should be wary of assigning his own opinions, prejudices or affections to the man or woman whose life he writes; he should take special

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pains to deal fairly with views which he does not share, or interests that bore him; his egoism should be muzzled and kept on a chain. He should constantly remind himself that it is not an autobiography that he is composing, but the life of someone else; the statue of Modesty should dominate his study, a finger on her lips.

A further temptation that may afflict the affable biographer is that of adding to his narrative the colors of fiction or romance. He may seek to convey reality by introducing imaginary conversations, or to brighten his pages by inserting really beautiful passages of scenic description:

As their little cavalcade breasted the hill and emerged from the grove of umbrella pines (pineus pinea) that crowned its summit, the fair city lay before them, basking all amethyst in the fading light. The Palazzo Pubblico had already melted into the pink and azure shadows of the Piazza del Campo, but the Torre del Mangia soared upwards, straight as a tulip against the sunset sky. Galeazzo turned to his venerable companion. "Messir," he said....

Such passages fail to convince the attentive reader, who is aware that umbrella pines are but few at Siena and that the company at the moment were traveling west to east. The imagination, as well as the self-assertiveness, of the author must be held in check.

Such then are the instincts, poisons and temptations that render biography impure. An undue desire to commemorate, a too earnest endeavor to teach or preach, a tendency to portray types rather than individuals, the temptation to enhance self-esteem by indulging in irony, the inability to describe selflessly, and the urge to slide into fiction or to indulge in fine writing—all these are the pests and parasites that gnaw the leaves of purity. Yet these are negative precepts, indicating the faults that should be eschewed. Are there any positive principles that can be recommended to the intended biographer?

It is self-evident that he should not select a subject outside the range of his sympathy or the area of his general knowledge. It would thus be a mistake for a man to embark upon a life of Pope if he were ill-attuned to the heroic couplet and disliked small

stratagems. It would be a mistake to start writing a life of Anselm without some knowledge of Plato's doctrines of ideas, or to embark upon Erasmus when ignorant of the humanities. It would be foolish for an Englishman to venture on a biography of Calvin Coolidge without having spent at least a year at Amherst and absorbed the indelible quality of that academy.

The ideal subject is one of which the author has direct personal experience and with which he can enter into sympathetic relationship. This raises the question whether it is in fact possible for any author-however skilled, courageous or sincere-to write a pure biography of a contemporary. It is clear that it will be of great advantage to him to have been personally acquainted with his hero and to have seen him not only in his moments of public triumph or efficiency, but also in those interludes of lassitude, dyspepsia or elation that reveal the character of a man. Important it is also to be able to visualize a person not in the set postures of official busts or portraits, but in the more illuminating attitudes of ordinary life. It is valuable to be able to recall the manner in which he coughed or grunted, the exact shape of his smile or frown, the sound of his laughter, and, above all, the tone of his voice. We are all conscious that the personality of our acquaintances is conveyed to us not merely by their physical appearance and expression, but also by their accent and intonation. It is illuminating to be told that Bismarck spoke with the piping notes of a schoolboy, that Napoleon when angry relapsed into the Corsican manner of speech, or that Tennyson when reciting his poems used the broad vowels of the Lincolnshire wold. It is valuable also for a biographer to be personally acquainted with the men and women who exercised an influence upon the life of his subject and to be able, by his own judgment, to assess their relative value. "How strange," he will reflect, "that my hero could ever for one moment have been taken in by such a charlatan as I know X to have been! How curious that he was never able to appreciate the shy wisdom, the fundamental integrity, of my dear friend Y!" This wider knowledge provides a system of triangulation, enabling the author to fix the position of his hero with greater accuracy than would ever be possible were he writing about people whom he had never personally known.

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Such are the advantages—and they are immense—which the biographer enjoys when writing the life of a contemporary. The disadvantages are also apparent. He will be inhibited by his disinclination to offend the susceptibilities of survivors. It is not only that he will hesitate to wound the feelings of relations and friends; it is also that the enemies of his hero may still be living and will protest violently against any criticisms that may be made. To some extent he can evade this difficulty by refraining from expressing any personal opinion and relying solely upon the documents in the case. But the necessity of maintaining a certain level of taste, consideration, caution and kindliness will certainly prevent him from revealing the truth in its most naked form.

Does this mean, I repeat, that it is impossible for an author to write a pure biography of a contemporary? I do not think so. He will realize of course that, human nature being what it is, the reader of his book will pay more attention to those passages which reveal defects hitherto concealed than to those which eulogize merits already familiar. The essential truth of any portrait depends upon the proper statement of relative values. A biographer should be aware that the "startling revelation" is certain to startle, and will thus assume in the reader's mind and memory an importance out of proportion to the portrait as a whole. His revelations therefore should not be picked out in scarlet or orange but introduced in neutral tints. His aim should be not to conceal defects or lamentable episodes, but to refer to them in such a manner as will indicate to the attentive reader that these shadows existed, without disconcerting the inattentive reader or wounding the legitimate feelings of surviving relations and friends. It is a question of tact and skill.

It has always interested me, when reading the biography of a person with whom I had been personally acquainted, to observe how the author deals with his faults. A device frequently adopted is to reveal the fault by denying its opposite. An extreme example of this method can be found in Sir Sidney Lee's biography of King Edward VII. Sir Sidney was an honest biographer, who desired to paint his portrait, warts and all. I had often heard that King Edward was a voracious eater and that he was apt to pounce

and gobble at the dishes placed before him. I wondered whether Sir Sidney would mention this genial characteristic and was impressed by the delicacy of his device. "He had," wrote Sir Sidney, "a splendid appetite at all times, and never toyed with his food." It is by such ingenuity that the biographer is able to omit no detail and yet to cause no offense.

I should cite as an excellent example of the way in which an intelligent biographer can indicate defects without wounding feelings Mr. Rupert Hart Davis' recent biography of Sir Hugh Walpole. The attentive reader is made aware of all the lights and shadows in the character portrayed, whereas the inattentive reader is not for one moment startled or shocked. Every weakness of Walpole's character is abundantly illustrated, yet the resultant impression is that of a gifted and charming man. I recommend this work to all those who question whether it is possible to write a pure biography of a contemporary figure. The artist has produced an authentic portrait owing to his sense of values; without such a sense, any biography is bound to be unconvincing.

It is here that a natural gift of selection is so valuable. The aim is to convey the personality of some interesting individual to people or generations who never knew him when alive. It is not possible for a biographer, even if he take twenty years and volumes, to present the whole man to posterity. He can hope only, by intelligent and honest selection, to convey the impression of the aggregate of his hero's merits and defects. If he allows himself to deck his portrait with striking little snippets and tags, the unity of impression will be destroyed. His curiosity therefore must be moderated by selection and taste; he must preserve throughout a uniform tone; and he must try—he must try very hard—to arrange his facts in the right order.

"The value of every story," remarked Dr. Johnson, "depends on its being true. A story is a picture, either of an individual, or of life in general. If it be false, it is a picture of nothing." This precept should, I feel, be inscribed in lapidary letters on the flyleaf of every biographer's notebook. A pure biography should furnish its readers with information, encouragement and comfort. It should provide, if I may again quote Dr. Johnson, "the parallel circumstances and

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kindred images to which we readily conform our minds." It should remind the reader that great men and women also have passed through phases of doubt, discouragement and self-abasement; that -perhaps on the very eve of their noblest achievements-they have been assailed with diffidence, or have resigned themselves to the fact that their vitality is ebbing, their zest has gone, their memory has become unreliable, and their will power decayed. Without seeking for one moment to preach a lesson, a good biography encourages people to believe that man's mind is in truth unconquerable and that character can triumph over the most hostile circumstances, provided only that it remains true to itself. Amusing books can be written about ridiculous people; fiction and romance can be twined as honeysuckle around the silliest head; but I am convinced that a pure biography, if its effect is to be more than momentary, can only be written about a person whom the writer and the reader can fundamentally respect.

Does this imply a return to hagiography? No, it implies only that the intending biographer should be as cautious in his choice of subject as in the method he pursues.

### Sinclair Lewis: A Portrait

#### FREDERICK F. MANFRED

A NGELA IS TWENTY-TWO was in town (Minneapolis) with Red Lewis starring in his own play. I bought a ticket to see it, and afterwards, when a friend of mine who was a Time reporter asked me to go along with him to interview Sinclair, I also got a brief close-up of him for the first time—the brief close-up being the length of time it took Red to poke his lean hawk's head around the corner of the door to say no, he was too busy seeing friends and relatives down from his home town, Sauk Center. The Time man was a considerate fellow, and I was timid, so we backed away and had ourselves a beer and a ham-on-rye instead at the old Stockholm Café.

My next contact with him came when he was conducting a writing class at the University of Minnesota in the fall quarter of 1942. At the time I didn't believe anyone could teach another to write (and I still don't, even though I've conducted writing classes of my own—you can inspire someone to get started, but only he really knows what he can and should say), but I did think that a successful writer could give a few pointers on how to place a completed manuscript. I wanted Red to read and to advise me on one of my three as yet unpublished novels, and I asked the head of the English department, the poet and critic Joseph Warren Beach, to intercede for me. The answer I got came in the form of a letter, as follows:

Minneapolis November 22, 1942 . 4

Dear Mr. Feikema:

I'm really sorry, but between the MSS I already have to read for my students, and the desperate final work on my

© FREDERICK F. MANFRED, novelist and friend of Sinclair Lewis, formerly wrote under the pen name of Feike Feikema. His next novel, *Lord Grizzly*, will be published in the fall of 1954.

new novel, which must be finished by Christmas, it would be quite impossible for me to read your novel.

> Sincerely yours, Sinclair Lewis

Then in the summer of 1944, our lives touched again. This time it came in the form of a protest from him. It seems that he had swooped in on the Regional Writing Committee of the University of Minnesota to have a look at the list of names of those given writing fellowships the previous year. I had been given one, and when he came across the title of my first novel, The Golden Bowl, to be published that fall, he entered a lengthy and emphatic protest with the secretary, Helen Clapesattle. He said I just simply could not and should not use a title that Henry James had already used for one of his novels. This protest came to me through my publisher, Paul Hillestad at the Itasca Press in St. Paul, Minnesota. Paul and I considered it at some length, but we finally decided to keep it, despite the objection that seemed, to me at least, to come from Mount Olympus, since the forms for the book were already set and since this was already a shortened form of my first title, The Golden Bowl Be Broken. Paul argued that the book trade folk would call it The Golden Bowl anyway, and I was thinking that we should use the ironic comment of the dusted-out farmers themselves for the title.

Then in January, 1946, I got to spend a long weekend, really almost a week, with Lewis in his own home up at Duluth, in the company of my wife Maryanna and Ann Chidester, another Minnesota writer. Enough time had passed by then for him to get around to reading my first novel, Golden Bowl. From what he said later, I learned that he had liked Bowl very much, and that he had quietly sent it on to the American Academy of Arts and Letters fiction committee, which awarded me, along with Jean Stafford, one of the 1945 grants-in-aid for a thousand dollars.

My wife and I had just bought a place out in the country. What with the furnace still not in and only an old oil stove to heat one room, my wife and I decided that she and the baby should stay in

town with Gramma while I stayed out alone to finish the final pages of my third novel, This Is the Year.

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It was the evening of the fourteenth, and I was in the midst of making a lonesome bachelor's meal of fried potatoes, steak, onions, along with tea, when the phone rang. In the mixup and uproar of settling into the house it happened that the electric stove had been set near the old-style country wall phone, and so while I answered it I kept right on stirring the potatoes and watching the steak.

It was the operator at the Curtis Hotel. Making sure she had her man, she put me through to a room, and the next voice I heard was a man's, clear, quick, nervous, high-pitched.

"Mr. Feikema?" The man had the accent right, on the first syllable.

"Yes?"

"This is Sinclair Lewis speaking."

"Oh," I said—flatly, because I didn't think it possible.

"Mr. Feikema, I'm simply delighted to hear your voice. I've read your Golden Bowl, and I'd like to meet you. Are you coming into Minneapolis one of these days by any chance?"

"Why, yes, it just happens I am coming in tomorrow."

"Wonderful. Wonderful. Could you drop in and see me? I'll be free all afternoon."

"Yes I could."

"Good. How about coming up to my rooms in the Curtis at, say, around four?"

"Sounds good to me."

"Wonderful." By the way his voice rose and fell I could tell that he was jumping around excitedly on the other end of the wire. "This is wonderful. A great pleasure. I've been looking forward to this. Really. I'm just simply delighted to hear your voice at last and that we'll meet."

"And I'm delighted." My voice was still flat, mostly because I still didn't think it possible that Sinclair Lewis was talking to me and was asking to see me. In fact, I was busy wondering if it couldn't possibly be one of my friends pulling my leg again.

We hung up. When I looked down, I found that my potatoes and steak and onions were burning.

I went in the next day and just for the heck of it took the precaution of buying his latest book, Cass Timberlane, and also one of my own, Boy Almighty. When I told the clerk, in boyish confidence, that I was buying Cass in the hope that I might get Red Lewis to autograph it, she shook her head and said he rarely did that for anyone any more. But I took the two books with me anyway.

I knocked on his door at precisely four. It was cold, and I remember that I was all bundled up in a big greatcoat and a high fur hat. The door opened and a pair of luminous gray-green eyes topped by thinning white hair looked up at me, looked up even though the head was tilted forward and down. Pale, almost imperceptible brows had climbed halfway up a high blond forehead.

"Mr. Lewis? I'm Feikema."

He exploded into action and seized my hand with both of his, excitedly, and said, "This is a pleasure. A real pleasure. Come in, come in. Here. Take off your things and put 'em there and sit down." He almost pranced around me. I was not used to such excitement, especially not from a celebrity, and sort of stiffly, numb, I slowly peeled off my heavy coat and fur hat.

Red said, "And look who's here. You know Ann Chidester from Stillwater?"

I said, "Oh yes. We're old friends. Hi, Ann."

"Hi, Fred." She was smiling, and had gotten to her feet, and came over to shake hands. She was a big, fine-looking girl with an open, honest face and merry, watchful eyes.

Red watched us, excited. "My God, isn't he a big lummox, Ann? I thought I was tall, but look at him. My God, he's bigger'n Paul Bunyan himself." Red walked around us like a coach who couldn't believe his eyes. "Well, well. Well, have a seat. Sit down. Now."

We all sat. Red and Ann lit cigarettes, and Ann began to fill in the gap with some remarks. I looked over at him, the social part of me numb but the back part of my brain racing and already beginning to record what I was seeing. I noted, among other things, that he was as lean and as tough-looking as a long string of jerked beef and that he had long talon-ended pale hands and a high doming forehead and quick though cracked lips and swift eyes that seemed to notice everything. He was wearing a tweed suit of what I would

call an orange shade that seemed to be a part of his whitening red hair and pale blond skin.

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My eyes finally fastened on his face. And the face I saw was a face to haunt one in dreams. It was a face that looked as if it were being slowly ravaged by a fire, by an emotional fire, by a fire that was already fading a little and that was leaving a slowly contracting lump of gray-red cinder.

We talked a few minutes, Ann and I, with Red listening, and watching my eyes and lips, and looking up and down my body, and observing my big wet feet (I still hadn't been able to buy galoshes or rubbers my size) and my big red hands, and then he said suddenly, "What've you got in that package?"

"A couple of books."

"Well? well?" he said, moving on his couch, reaching out a hand, snapping his fingers. "Well, are you going to let me see it?"

I handed the package to him, and his nervous, tic-ridden fingers pulled off the wrapping. He looked. "Good, good," he said, "fine. Here, you fix up your book to me and I'll fix up yours."

I was glad to comply, and I wrote something to the effect that I regarded him as one of those who had shown the way for the younger writing generation coming in, had made it possible for them to relax while they were being honest. He was quite pleased with the sentiment, and a quick tear came and went in his eyes. He made a quick move to hide his feelings, and waved his slinging arms and hands around for us to keep talking. What he wrote for me in his book made the blood suddenly roar through my head. He wrote only three words. But they were words a young brave longs to hear from a chief. And, for my own sanity, they were also words I quickly shook some salt on.

We sat maybe some five minutes, talking about this, that and the other, nothing serious that I remember now anyway, when all of a sudden he got to his feet—I had gotten up to get a handkerchief from my overcoat—and said, speaking over his shoulder at Ann, "Isn't he a whopper? Isn't he, isn't he? Look," he said, "look, we've got to see more of each other. How about you coming up for a couple of days to my home in Duluth? On a visit? Then we can talk and talk. Visit. How about it? And you too, Ann. Both of you."

He went into another sort of prancing run around us, waving his lean, almost luminescent hands, plans tumbling out of his cracked lips in profusion. "Look, how about next week? Ann, you've got a good car, so you pick him up. Ah-h, say, come up on Thursday. And stay as long as you like. A week. Ten days. A whole weekend at least. That'll be fine. Okay, Fred?"

"Sure, that's fine. If it won't be too much of a bother."

"Bother? bother? Not at all. You must come."

I said, "Uh, Mr. Lewis, would you mind if I took my wife along?" "Wife? wife?" A shadow passed over his cinder-tight face. "Wife?"

I laughed. "I'm still at that stage, Mr. Lewis, where I like to share things with my wife. Or maybe I'm just old-fashioned."

"Where do you get that 'mister' stuff, huh? You hate me or somethin', huh? I'm Red to my friends."

"Red, then. Could Maryanna come with me?"

"Oh-h... all right. If you must. But Ann will drive you up. Okay, Ann?"

Ann said, "That's fine with me, Red."

"Good, good. That's all set then. Fine."

About then his driver came in for some instructions. Red introduced him as Ace. The driver was a slow-smiling, calm-faced fellow with quiet eyes that sized things up realistically. Red said, "By the way, Ace, the kids here, Ann and Fred, are coming up to spend a week with me. Isn't that wonderful? We'll just have a wonderful time. I need a little life and excitement around me before I start the new book and they'll be just right."

"I see," Ace said, hardly changing expression. "Sounds fine."

"It is fine," Red said, dancing around Ace. "And we'll have a swell time."

After Red had dismissed Ace, he gave us a mischievous look. "Ace's not only the best driver in the state of Minnesota but the most informed. What he don't know about Duluth isn't worth recording. He used to operate a taxi stand there and he ran into all of the stuck-ups at all hours of the night and in all sorts of conditions."

We laughed.

We talked some more, and then finally, noticing that he seemed on edge about something, and thinking perhaps I had used up my first welcome, I made a move to go. Ann got up too. He seemed relieved.

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He repeated his invitation in the doorway as we shook hands. "Well, I'll see the two of you next week. Thursday, sometime in the afternoon."

"Fine, Red." To make sure he understood I had his permission to take my wife with me, I said, "It's all right then if Maryanna comes with me?"

"Who?"

"My wife."

"Oh. Her. Well . . . okay. If she must, take her along."

Driving up in the bitter cold, with a good foot of snow lying on the ground, it seemed strange to me that we should be going to visit a quick-tempered, even hot-tempered man in that cold northland pine country, where the land was always either green or white or both. Even his nickname Red seemed out of place.

We got there in the afternoon, and he held open the door of his banker-class Tudor house and welcomed us in friendly fashion. His housekeeper showed us our rooms. We freshened ourselves and came down, and were invited to have tea with him in the dining room. He took the head of the table, placed Ann on his left, Maryanna on his right, and me across from him—a chair, I remember thinking, that a wife of his should have sat in. The dining room was really a sort of splendid dining hall, with walnut paneling and colored windows and thick carpeting and hand-carved sideboards encircling a red-leather-topped table and red-leather armchairs. The chairs caught my eye in particular because they were the first I had encountered in which I could lounge a little while I ate.

As the tea was being poured by the housekeeper—she had taken a seat to my right for a few moments—Red took a notebook out of his pocket and waited a moment for the talk to die down, then said, "Look, I'd like to get your reaction to these titles." He put down a nervous finger, traced the titles. "Kingson, Kingsblood, Kingsman. Which do you like best for a book that's about a man who

believes in a family legend that somewhere way back one of the ancestors descended from royalty? When all along he's really got some Negro blood in him?"

All three of us chose Kingsblood. The unanimity surprised him. He looked around at all of us, nodded, said, "Good. I've got the title for my new book then. And now I can relax for the rest of your stay here. Next week I can begin work."

I had heard before about Red's way of letting others choose his titles for him, and sitting there I had the distinct feeling that he had taken our pulse, that with his finger on the pulse he was again his father, the country bedside doctor, the father he admired to idolatry. And I also had the feeling that Red was asking us to share in the responsibility—some would say guilt—for the kind of books he wrote.

Then he turned over a page in the notebook and looked at me. "Read your Boy Almighty. I've been coughing"—he demonstrated—"been coughing ever since. Felt like I really had TB myself. Wonderful. Have only a few adverse comments to offer." He peered down at the notebook. "You've got a little too much bull in it." There was a laugh around the table. He laughed too. "But I mean it. Here." He tore out the sheet and handed it across to me, I looked at it:

Feikema-

Fawkes' notes
Excessive virility—
manroots
bull seeding heifer
Wants fellow dreamer

P.S. Ace and I got TB.

"Could I keep this?" I asked.

"Of course, course. I want you to keep it. And to take those things and consider 'em. I'm not giving orders, you understand. I just want you to look at it."

Tea finished, Red said he had a few errands to do up in his room. The womenfolk thought they should change for dinner, and I

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thought that with my TB background I could use a cat nap. Before I went up to our room, Red's housekeeper, buxom, quite self-contained and obviously proud of her position, wanted to show me the place. In the living room she pointed out the "expensive" phonograph radio, the Childe Hassam oils, the massive and "expensive" lamps, the thick rugs, the drapery, the "snappy" chairs; in the solarium she pointed out some choice knickknacks while completely overlooking the walls that were tight with "expensive" sets of books; in the hall she again pointed out some "expensive" lamps while overlooking a couple of cases full of good books; and then, coming to the room where Maryanna and I were to stay, she pointed out some more "expensive" lamps. The lamps seemed to be on her mind, for some reason or other, and to kid her a little, I said, "I ought to snitch one and then I could live easy for a couple of years."

She gave me a hooded look. "Better not play any gags," she said. "They really do cost a lot of money. That one by your bed there cost over two hundred dollars."

I gave her a stare. My wife and I had been managing to get along with a little number over our bed that cost us \$1.98 at Sears, Roebuck.

She nodded. "It's true."

"Lady, I'll take care of that lamp as if it were my own child. Don't worry."

The truth is, after that lamp harangue, I was careful not to turn on any lamps except the one in the bathroom. That one, I decided, had been put in by the contractor's electrician and was probably designed for service.

While the women finished dressing, I sat in a chair in front of our second-story window and looked out far across to Lake Superior. Its surface was almost covered with ice, with the center still blue and steaming mightily. I looked down and saw the city of Duluth staggered roof by roof down the high bluff to the water front. It was a mighty sight and I thought to myself, well, maybe Red has found his home at last—because this is a sight that could inspire even a king to poetry.

At the dinner that night he got going on the race question. He had spent some time in the South and had also hired himself a

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male colored cook, a cook who had excellent reading tastes. Red not only seemed to have explored the scenes of racial intolerance, but had also done a lot of reading on the subject. He probed us to see how we reacted to it all, but the only reaction he got from us was agreement. It was obvious, as we went along, that Red's interest was more than just casual, that in fact, as his list of titles suggested, he was about to explore the race question—which he did, of course, in his next novel, *Kingsblood Royal*. Red's way of arguing was to exaggerate a point and then sit back. If anybody was so foolish as to reply exaggeratedly, Red was out and pouncing. And though some new sores along his lips seemed to hurt him when he talked too vigorously, he didn't let his prey get away.

Dishes came and went, and we talked and talked, and finally around nine-thirty we retired to the living room. We sat before a white marble fireplace. Ann and Red hooked up in a furious chess game while the phonograph played Delius. Somehow, it seemed to me at the time, "Seadrift" seemed to fit the mood of the dappled yellow-green Hassams on the wall. The music was soothing to me, though to Red, when he got behind in his chess game, it seemed a stimulant. Ann was a solid player, steady, while Red was inclined to be too daring in the beginning, which put him behind, and then he had to turn on the heat. He was good when pressed. After winning the game, Red indicated he was tired and turned down the housekeeper's offer to serve a nightcap. We all went to bed—the male Feikema careful not to turn on any of the high-priced lamps.

The next few days went along at about the same tempo: meals at regular hours but with a lot of time spent talking afterwards over coffee around the red-topped table while lolling in the huge armchairs. We talked of life and letters. Ann was a great storyteller, and she had a way of building up a climax in even the most ordinary of events that made Red listen with his mouth partially open.

Someone happened to mention Mencken, and Red's face clouded. "Yes, Hank was a great guy. Real force. Did a lot of good. And I liked the old Hank. That is, the Hank when he was younger. He was an honest fighter. But lately, he's taken to issuing pronunciamentoes from on high. And that I don't like. Taking himself entirely too seriously."

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Another mentioned Dreiser and what a tower of a man he was. Again Red was disturbed about something and waving his spoon over his cup, he said, "True, true. Dreiser's great, all right. But one thing many people don't know about. He wasn't always for the underdog. Not at all. When he was an editor he was one of the toughest devils to talk to any young writer had, to face. Ted was all apple pie to the old successful hack, but when any young punk came in, Dreiser was all teeth. He was like a bulldog defending his master's, his boss's property. He scared the talent out of many a timid young fellow."

Ann said, "He didn't seem to have scared you."

"Of course not. I fought back. I wasn't afraid of him. The big boob."

Someone mentioned Jim Farrell, saying that he was quite an admirer of Dreiser even though their political religions were in violent opposition at the end. This caused Red to smile in memory and he said, "You know, I have to admire Jim. I gave his latest book a panning in *Esquire*. I said he was writing sloppily, besides thinking sloppily. And what do you know. Sometime later Jim gets a chance to take a crack at me in print and he says, 'Who? Red Lewis? That old hack?' "Red laughed. "He sure whacked me one there."

"Are you going to whack him back?"

"What? Never. We each take a crack and then we quit. Otherwise we're admitting we've been hit bad."

Red added, "Now you kids, when you get bad reviews, let most of 'em go. But somewhere along the line, when you get a chance, and the chance is a good one and you're properly enraged, why then let fly." Red chuckled and daintily touched his sore lips with a voluminous white handkerchief. "Never will forget the way I fixed one fellow. He was an English reviewer. In England. And by great luck we met at a party. He had taken me all apart in his reviews, you know, had just given me a whale of a beating, from one end to the other. I was awful, he said. No art at all. Sheer reporting. Rampant journalism. Wrote enormous fat notebooks. Said I should brood more over my things. Et cetera. Said what I had to say was pure tripe. That the paper it was printed on had been wasted, and

so on. I spotted him at this party, then, and so I said to my friend sitting next to me, 'Watch this. I'm going to give this guy the Minnesota treatment.' I introduced myself. When he heard my name, he blinked and took a step back, raising his hands as if he expected me to punch him. Then I turned on the charm. I thanked him profusely for all the wonderful attention he had given me. Told him nobody, not even the American critics, had shown such insight into my work. No one had noticed all the subtle nuances that he had seen. Oh, I just laid it on. Finally my friend jerks my elbow and whispers, 'For godsakes, Red, cut it out. This is killin' me.'"

"What happened?"

Red laughed. "Why, after that I never got better reviews in my life. He became the greatest expert on Red Lewis in Europe."

We talked about Upper Midlands writers, in particular Minnesota writers: Le Sueur, Gray, Seeley, Krause, Beach, Warren, Stegner, Derleth. About Robert Penn Warren, who was teaching at the University of Minnesota, he fell silent. It happened that I had met Red Warren and that I had read his poems and novels. I said that I thought highly of him both as man and as artist. Red Lewis listened with interest. At the time it was difficult to tell if he had read Warren or was keeping his opinion to himself. He did mutter that a writer had to be careful not to get the "literary clique religion," which was just as bad as the Jesus or the Mohammedan or the Lenin religion. That night, when we went to bed, I happened to notice on his bedtable, beside Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* that he was reading, one of Warren's books. Later, Red Lewis was one of the first to hail Red Warren's new book, *All the King's Men*.

Sitting before the great picture window one evening, watching twilight deepen the steaming grayish-blue of Lake Superior to dark blue, Red fell into a self-belittling mood. It was as if the end of another day had reminded him that eventually it all had to end at last in the endless blue-dark of eternity. "That's the way it goes. For a little while you have it. The old bite, the old sting. And you give it to 'em while you have it. And everybody cheers and everybody says, 'He's really on today, isn't he? He's really hot this time! Wow!' But it isn't long before it's all gone. The vim, the vigor, the

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celestial spark. All gone." Red continued to look out over the darkening lake in the falling night. "You may kid yourself for a little while that you've still got it, of course. You may even go around with young kids for a time in the hope of picking up a little of their natural fire. You may even give instructions on how the blurbs for your books should be written—and then when they come out, believe the blurbs yourself. But it isn't long before you're shown up." The lake began to resemble an endless waste of honed basalt. "And if it really should happen that your fangs hang on, society will make damn sure to separate you from them. Oh not by the obvious way of pulling them out by means of the critical pliers, or by means of the censor's scissors. No, no. But by blandishments. By fussy overattention. By studied cajolery." The night came down tight then and at last the lake and the sky were gone, and Red turned in his chair to look at us. "And they do it so subtly and smoothly that the old rattler himself usually doesn't know when he's been defanged. So that every so often, when people get a little too free or gay with the way they handle the old boy, just to show 'em that he's still got it, that he's still dangerous, that he still possesses his old sting, the old boy coils up, and opens his serpent's mouth and hisses, and drums his rattles. And they, remembering how he used to knock 'em dead, they all back away a little again. And murmur and whisper half-fearfully and half-admiringly about how the old boy still can do it. He may even strike a couple of times, hitting live flesh here and there. So that then everybody cheers and shouts, 'By God, he actually really did it again!'" Red let a hand fall from his lap. "But after a while, when none of the stung die, it becomes apparent it was a hollow show. That he didn't have it at all anymore."

We also talked about the great middle class. On this he was quite voluble, saying among other things that the middle class had always been and would always be, and how happy he had been to see that that was what he should write about, since he knew it so well all the way back to his roots—they were his meat, and they were also his friends. He said, "You know, people just don't understand me. Here I think I've presented a warm picture of the man Cass Timberlane, and everybody thinks I hate him. Well, if I hate him

I hate myself. Which I don't. At least not that I'm aware of."

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And there was one occasion when he did re-enact the role of a Babbitt. We had not been there more than a day when he told us that he had decided to leave Duluth, that he had already sold the house for May delivery, and that he was now engaged in selling some of the extra furniture which he didn't want to cart across the country to Massachusetts. Sure enough, when a furniture dealer showed up to have a look at the things, along with some of the many rare lamps, Red undertook to do the selling himself. He haggled and rubbed his hands and jumped up and down and stamped his feet and gasped in mock amazement at low offers and swept the dealer with shrewd side looks. And when they had done, he came back into the solarium, rubbing his hands still, smiling like the cat that had caught the mouse, exclaiming, "By God, I think I did him more than he did me." He relished it.

The second night there, he organized a small party. Two of the guests, a married couple, were exclusive folk, he said. "People who because of their race are not welcome in the homes of the Duluth mighty, the elegant supersnoots. When I first came to Duluth, I used to hang around a little with Margaret Culkin Banning and the Oliver Mining Company crowd, but when they wouldn't invite my friends, and especially these two friends, why I cut 'em. Besides, after the first highball, Margaret always thinks she has to tell me what's wrong with my novels. When I know better what's wrong with 'em than she does. Why, one night she tried to tell Johnny Gunther what he really should have done with his *Insides*. Nah, she's too bossy." The other two people to come, Red said, were a judge and his good wife. "A judge everybody thinks I modeled Cass Timberlane after. Utter nonsense. Not so at all. As you will see when you meet him."

The party was a success at first. We were still lingering over coffee in the luxurious dining room when they came, and Red suggested that they all come right in and join us for another cup.

It wasn't long before one of the women mentioned the name of his former wife, Dorothy Thompson, the newspaper columnist. Red's eyes lighted up. Someone said he had heard her give a talk in favor of re-electing Roosevelt, a fighting talk as it turned out,

and when the account of it was finished, Red said, hitting the table, "Atta girl, Dotty. Give it to 'em!"

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We all smiled. He really still liked her. Red said, "Yes, Dorothy was a great gal. A wonderful gal. If only she hadn't been so damn bossy." He sighed deeply. "But . . . she being what she was, she just had to be bossy. Too bossy. That poor fellow she's married to now, I sure pity him. I know exactly what he's going through."

Red then gave a mimic's account of what living with Dorothy was like. He pictured and acted out an entire day's life with her. For a few minutes Red was two other people. It was a brilliant, dazzling show.

Finished, Red peered around at all of us to see what the effect had been.

There were laughter and big round eyes from the audience. Seeing that Ann was laughing the loudest, Red suddenly turned on her. "And you. Look at you. Built just like her. Husky. Vigorous. Strapping and powerful. Clear-eyed Brunhilde all over again. Got a lot of strong opinions. And you write too. And you do what you want. Oh-h, I sure pity the guy you marry. You'll treat that poor bugger just like Dorothy treats that poor man." He lashed out a long yellow finger at Ann. "Why don't you leave us poor little fellows alone? We're only trying to get along the best we can. In our little way." He looked over at me to include me in the talk. "We're only trying to get along like honest men. Fred and me. We're harmless. We don't mean any harm. But here you big American women come along and beat us up and lock us up and babyfeed us from dawn to sunset. When you give us your opinion you raise your voice and beat the table like any fool of a man. My goodness, woman, let us have some freedom. So we get a chance to grow up. First thing you know, the little will power we have left will be completely atrophied in us. Please."

We laughed harder than ever, Ann still hardest. She was choking with it. Red was in fine form and knew it.

"Yeah, you American women. I know a certain Midland college president. Famous fellow. Great administrator—probably gets more brilliant ideas per day than his entire faculty combined. But the poor bugger's doomed. He's married to an American woman. And

you know what she does? Besides wishing she were back in the good old days when she was a foetus? He isn't awake one minute but what she hasn't pricked his balloon. You know how a man is in the morning. After he's washed the sleep out of his eyes, and is sipping at his coffee, why, he slowly starts getting a few ideas on how he's to face the day. Ideas at that time are very delicate and uncertain. They need to be encouraged. They need warmth and love. Gentle love. So here he is, the poor sucker, warming his hands around his cup of coffee, savoring it, feeling the warmth of it rising in his nostrils, and slowly but surely becoming aware of a few timid little morning notions in his head, and vaguely hoping that these little timid creatures may grow up . . . when all of a sudden his hag of a wife has to mention some horrible personal defect of his, some trivial little thing that sticks him in the soft spot, that only she could know because she dresses and undresses on the opposite side of the bed from him. And wheeet! Gone are the little timid embryo ideas for that day. How that man has refrained from poisoning her is beyond me. Beyond me. No, most modern American women are ruined. Ruined."

There was some more laughter, mostly from the males.

"Yeah, and I'm the only male here who can talk up. The rest of you bums are married and 're scared of what your wife will do to you when you go to bed tonight."

More laughter, this time uneasily from the men.

One woman in the crowd couldn't let the hot ember lie, and she challenged him. "Oh now, Mr. Lewis, you know that's exaggerated."

He leaped up, a yellow fire, finger darting like a licking flame. "What d'you mean, 'exaggerated'? Of course it's not exaggerated. American women are like that. Killers of talent. Unless it's talent which helps them obtain power. But the minute it's talent that they can't control or understand, why, stab stab stab, they've got to prick that balloon. The . . . the . . . of course they're like that."

"Oh come now."

Red jumped about a foot. And suddenly he kicked back his chair and whirled and lunged out of the room and tramped upstairs to his den.

An appalling silence fell over us. Our host had left us.

Finally Ann said, trying to pull the gap together again, "It's all my fault. I shouldn't've laughed so hard when he was teasing me."

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"No no," the woman who had challenged Red said. "No no, it's my fault." She turned very red. She put a hand to her face and hid her eyes. "What do we do now?"

For the moment no one had an idea. We all toyed with our spoons, clinking the coffee cups a little.

The woman said, "God, I feel awful."

It just happened that Red's calm-faced driver, Ace, had joined us some ten minutes before (Red had the custom of getting his cook, driver, and housekeeper into all sorts of discussions with his guests—it was probably one of his ways of getting interesting reactions), and he said simply, "Just let him alone. Give him time to cool off. He'll be back. Keep talking down here as if nothing happened. I've been around him long enough and I know that'll do it. He's quick-tempered but he's also a quick forgiver."

If Red was a quick forgiver, I thought to myself, why did he still think the way he did about American women? It was either a case of an irascible temper or a case of extreme provocation. Or both.

"God, I feel awful," the woman said. She made moves to get up and go home. Her husband held her down.

Ann asked me, "What do we do now? These people can go home but we're staying at his house."

"I dunno. Follow Ace's advice I guess." I tried to smile. "Furthermore, for myself, I don't think I've done anything to feel guilty about. My God, we're allowed private opinions on these things, aren't we? That you feel you shouldn't laugh so loud is all wrong. You're letting him move in on you."

"God, I feel awful," the woman said.

Sure enough, after we had managed to knit some sort of conversation together again, all the while very aware of his pacing directly above us, we heard him coming down the stairs and then shuffling through the hall. He came in diffidently, almost like a little boy, a little boy who was having a hard time admitting he had been in the wrong. He stood at the head of the table and looked at all of us, each of us, and then apologized very graciously, almost

sweetly, and as he drew up his chair and sat down, he turned to the red-faced woman. "Really, my dear, you know I'm touchy on that subject. Why did you have to stir me up? You know that you shouldn't've stirred that old knife that's still sticking in me."

Slowly the talk picked up again, and the embarrassed woman got back her original coloring, and Red let loose more and more, and by the time the party broke up, it was as if the blowup had never been. Everyone was gaily bidding everyone else good night.

The next day Ann happened to find, in one of the guest rooms, a bookcase full of first editions, foreign editions, special editions of all Red's work. Red's reaction was one of shyness. He refused to talk about the books, and after a moment or two, led us away.

Apparently, however, the incident served to warm him up to something, and it wasn't long before he had me in his workroom showing me how he did his writing. (Ann apparently had been given the same kindness at an earlier date.) He showed me how he laid out his plots, even to building a miniature city with the main house or setting especially set up in detail. He let me page through his notebooks, telling me about his manner of collecting and note-taking. He let me see his notebook containing the master list of the names of all characters he had ever used. He showed me a sample of his first draft, second draft with corrections, and his third draft. Then, he said, he always tried to get someone to read the whole book back to him. And, at the very last, he copied the final draft himself. "Because I always find something which no stenographer on earth would find."

As he talked he was very careful to stress that these were his methods, worked out painfully over a long period of time, and that I was not to think that I should follow them even remotely. "Work out your own system that fits you, and t'hell with everybody else's system. You're the only one that knows what's right for you. That is, if you've got the brains."

This led later on into his questioning about my publisher, the Itasca Press. We were having dinner at the time.

"How come you got published by a Midland outfit in St. Paul there?"

"Well . . . because the editor there, Paul Hillestad, was willing

to work with me, while the Eastern dodos would either say nothing or tell me vaguely to rewrite."

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"Maybe they were right."

"Never. They complained about my dialogue. Said no one talked that way. Well, it just happens, Red, that that's the one thing I've really got. An ear for speech and sound. I defy anybody to beat it." Red's eyes opened at this and he smiled a little.

"They tried to tell me I should see how Steinbeck did his Okies. That really made me roar, because it was my considered opinion that Steinbeck did not quite get those Okies. What he had was partially affected. And I don't mean artistically, because that might be all right. He listened to the Okies in California, all right, but he got so lousy sentimental he read sounds into their mouths they could never have uttered." I snorted. "Then these same dodos suggested I go see how Hemingway did it. I said I wasn't sure Hemingway had caught it either. To me he has the sound of a man who has spent too much time listening to a bunch of barroom bums just sober enough to mutter monosyllables. Or maybe too much time listening to himself say truly yes and truly no."

Red laughed.

"At any rate, Paul Hillestad let my real stuff alone. And Paul took the time to read over every line with me and made me fight to keep it. I learned to write with that fellow. And I now defy anyone to take one line out of any one of my books. That anyone had better have an armful of reasons if he tries it, because I've always got that many for keeping it in—besides feeling that it should stay in."

Red nodded. "Well, that's all very well and all. But now it's time for you to go to an Eastern house and get distribution."

"Maybe the Itasca Press can get that for me too."

"Nah. Got to have a big house in the East. They're the only ones who can do that for you. You've got to have distribution, audience reaction. Got to know that what you are saying is hitting. Otherwise you're writing in a wilderness, in a vacuum. To nobody. Got to have that finger right on that pulse or else you're missing it."

"But, Red, I don't like leaving Paul just like that. We're friends. I couldn't just pull out and leave just because I want to go out and make a lot of money."

"Well, if you're friends and 're afraid you'll get softhearted, write him a letter and point-blank tell him to send it back to you by mail."

"Oh, but you can't do that to a friend, man!"

Red leaped up, shoving back his chair. "'Friend'? You a friend with a publisher? Are you mad? Never be close friends with a publisher. They get the notion they're married to you then. Can boss you around. Nah. Publishers are peddlers. Book peddlers. You write 'em, and they peddle 'em. Publishers are supposed to be commercial. They don't write books. Couldn't. Or else they would."

"I dunno, Red. Paul is an awful good friend of mine."

He stared at me, eyes reddening a little. Then he shot a look at Maryanna sitting to his right, and asked, "Fred and this Hillestad guy, they aren't married, are they?"

Maryanna laughed. "No. But they do like each other."

"Terrible mistake. Always keep your publisher at a distance. Especially the editor." Red sat down again, went into a lengthy history of his own relations with Harcourt, Brace, with Doubleday, and finally Random House. He had kind words only for the latter. I couldn't help remembering that the last named was his current publisher.

Red sat down again. "Look, I'm not going to have you remain buried out here with a Midland outfit. I'll fix you up a letter to my agent and he'll get you into a new house—a big one in the East."

"I'll first have to talk to Paul. A man just doesn't walk out without some explanation. Besides, I'm not sure I want to leave. That's to be my decision."

Red jumped up again. This time I thought I was going to get the red-faced woman's treatment. "No no no, you have to go East! You've got to get your stuff out. New York is the publishing center. Not the Twin Cities. All the Twin Cities is known for is flour milling. It's not the book center. You're going at this all wrong. You big bullheaded Dutchman."

"I'm a stiff-necked Frisian."

"What's the difference? Frisian, Dutchman, it's all the same."

"Oh no. Calling a Frisian a Dutchman is like calling an Irishman an Englishman."

"Anyway, you've got to go East." With that, Red strode out of the room.

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Some ten minutes later he came back with a letter. He handed it to me.

"Read it."

It was to his agent, saying that he was instructing me to send him my next book, *This Is the Year*, almost finished. The letter was emphatic, almost written like a military command.

Red was slowly but surely taking and making me over. He began to act like a possessive father to me, as if I were a sort of balky, stubborn son who needed a little harnessing and stropping to get into line. He even bothered to check up on my manners—telling me, for example, that I shouldn't talk with my hand over my mouth (a habit I had whenever I wasn't sure of myself), that I should wear conservative clothes since I stuck out enough as it was, that I should watch my health like a hawk, what with having a tubercular history. And in a way, I liked the attention. Heretofore I'd had to battle everything out alone. My own relatives weren't too eager about my wanting to write, and there wasn't one of them who was capable of any sort of advice, even bad. The final result was that I did go East. But only after I had told everything to Paul and only after he had assured me that he wanted me to follow whatever course would prove best for me.

We were talking in the library the last day. We were to leave shortly.

Suddenly Red said, looking over at my wife as she stood beside a bookcase, "Maryanna, come here. Come here."

She went near him, almost warily.

He took her hand and kissed it. "Maryanna, at first I didn't know about this business of Fred being married. But having seen you for a couple of days now I know you're just right for him. Just right." He kissed her hand again. "Fine woman, fine woman. And Fred, you be good to her. And listen to her advice. She knows what's best."

This made me smile. I had been careful not to tell Maryanna about Red's frown when I'd asked if she could go along. Also, Maryanna happens to be one of the most sympathetic listeners in

captivity, and, true to her nature, throughout the visit she had confined herself to a few brief, telling remarks salted in at the right places.

"Remember now," he said.

Then it was time to go. I was first to get ready, and came downstairs where he was waiting. I carried our suitcases. The others were still chatting upstairs, finishing their dressing for the cold and the road. It was below zero outside.

I stood near the door with fur cap in hand, big coat on. Red paced back and forth in front of a long table, where a mail tray and a big lamp had been placed on a runner. He walked with head down, hands folded behind him. His long silk robe rustled.

Abruptly he broke off his pacing. He came up to me and gave me a long under-the-brow look, and then punched me lightly and playfully in the belly. "Look at you. A great big fellow. With your whole life still before you. With the whole wide world still to conquer—when, from that height, it's already at your feet. A lot of world because you stand tall."

I protested a little. "Some have thought my tallness a hindrance." "Who?"

"Well, I'm not too sure my wife's accepted it. Out on the dance floor, for example. Sitting down, yes."

"Have you accepted it?"

"Yes."

"Does it bother you?"

"Not any more."

"Look. Don't trip over your own strength. Like I did for a while over mine."

"You?"

He pointed to his ravaged face. "Yes, me." A look came over his features then, as if he hated what he was going to say, because it was self-pity and he despised self-pity. "There was a time in my life when I was sure that with this to look at, anybody who said they loved me were liars—said it because they had to."

I swallowed. I didn't know what to say. What was there to say to a remark like that? I didn't know at the time, anyway. But I got used to it and turned it to account.

He punched me lightly in the belly again, and he mellowed, and he said, "Work. Work. Work. And it'll all bend before you."

Then the women came down and it was time to go. He threw his arms around both Maryanna and Ann, gripped my hand.

I saw him three times after that: once at a party given by a University of Minnesota professor; later in his rooms in the St. Paul Hotel, where he entertained Ann and Maryanna and me along with another young man who wanted to write; and then later in his rooms at the Algonquin in New York City. Except for one short spell, he didn't have much to say, and that exception had to do with a parody of the old-time Bible-pounding hell-and-damnation preacher—something he was looking into since he was already working on *The God-Seeher*.

Once some University of Minnesota students, who were planning to put out a literary quarterly, asked me if I wouldn't write to ask him for a contribution of some sort. In the same letter, knowing he would be interested, I told him of my own plans.

His answer was characteristic:

Thorvale Farm Williamstown, Mass. November 3, 1945

Dear Fred:

The Chokecherry Tree and World's Wanderer sound grand, and I rejoice in them. The North Star Review sounds terrible—just like every other of the 10,000 Lil Magazines of the past 30 years. It will probably be lots of fun, and a complete waste of time and money, but parental advice never did keep the lusty young man from dumb girl. I might, however, faintly whisper that a novelist's job is to write novels, not try to compete with professional magazine publishers.

Ever, Red --

# My Great-Grandmothers Were Happy

#### PRISCILLA ROBERTSON

THERE HAVE BEEN TIMES AND PLACES in which it was fun to be 1 good, and others in which it was more fun to be bad. American society today teeters on the balance, where we often find traditions and opportunities which help us live lives as full as any in past history, yet at the same time we sometimes find ourselves saying (occasionally in earnest, often only in wistful jokes) that the best way to have a really good time is to break some of the rules. Is this a heritage from our distant past, or only from the 1920's? I have recently had a chance to find out a good deal about my ancestresses for six generations back, and have come to the conclusion that for them it was fun to be good; they lived at a time and place where such a life was possible. It was only as conditions changed, toward the end of the nineteenth century, that women's sphere narrowed down rather suddenly so that there were a good two generations that were either left partially idle or had to fight for the right to use their abilities freely.

If people want to break the rules, the trouble is not necessarily with the people; it may be with the rules. Tom Sawyer is a wonderful example of a boy who had fun being bad. Most of the restrictions which he ran into no longer exist. Today schools and homes are adapted to boys' interests, so the chances of having fun as a good boy are much greater. A hundred years earlier, say in 1740, Tom Sawyer might not have been allowed to get away with his pranks at all, and then he could not have had fun either as a good boy or as a bad boy. I am using the words good and bad for the moment as the authorities concerned would have looked on the matter. Tom's aunt called him a bad boy, however worthy and normal a modern psychologist would judge him.

© PRISCILLA ROBERTSON is the author of Revolutions of 1848: A Social History. The material for this article comes from a privately published volume which she wrote for her family, Lewis Farm: A New England Saga.

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Very much the same sort of thing is true about women and their place in life, though the idea of goodness in women has so often been narrowed down to one particular form of goodness that the broad problem is harder to see. There have been ages when bad women had, or seemed to have, more fun than good women, and other ages when hardly any women led exhilarating lives. There have been still other times when women acting from the highest moral motives have been punished for being unladylike. In recent times, various processes which cramped women's life came to a peak in my mother's generation—freedom was actually greater both before and after that period. Having just been through a severe struggle, women are now used to the excitement of battle and perhaps a little tired of it. They have forgotten, and may be unwilling to believe, that there have also been periods in history when women have lived full, rich lives while doing exactly what they were supposed to do. In fact, there are signs that another such period is coming now, a period when women can enjoy their status without fighting for it or having to justify it. These thoughts came as a surprise to me after I had a chance to brood over the kind of happiness my great-grandmothers enjoyed-their lives were unified, their responsibilities serious ones, and gaiety was no stranger to them.

The women I am talking about lived in a Massachusetts village during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They were in no way distinguished or unusual. In fact, their very ordinariness reveals a basic American pattern of equality and independence—a pattern which indicates that we have in times past offered women more of a place in the world than we realize.

A good life should offer affection, appreciation and a secure social position—and women used to enjoy these things. It should also offer responsibility, a chance for imagination and adventure. Some people say the trouble with women today is that in demanding these latter advantages they have deprived themselves of the former. What I have come to believe about my New England family, however, is that both sexes received both sets of privileges. As a matter of fact, if there was a slight edge, it was on the girls' side, for as wealth and leisure increased, the girls began to get

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good educations at a time when the boys still could not be spared from farm work. But this education was regarded as an investment for the whole family, certainly not as a form of conspicuous waste. The girls often became teachers and were certainly supposed to be better mothers for it.

Beyond this, whatever life offered of hard work, family affection, religious consolation, community responsibility and adventure was open equally to the women and to the men. In their simple sort of life, no one's influence reached beyond the town in which he lived. The men were farmers first and may have been blacksmiths or saddlers on the side. The first sign of division or discrimination between the sexes came a generation after the new industrial system had drawn men away from work at home into places where women did not go. Only then did women begin to suffer the slightly contemptuous treatment of being left out, even if it was called sparing them pain and trouble.

Of course I realize that the persons who made the great public decisions during the time of which I write—the judges, theologians and great merchants—were men. This may have involved a theoretical injustice, but it was certainly one which did not rankle in the hearts of my great-grandmothers. It is a very different thing for the social structure to put one man in twenty in a position of wide power ahead of his wife, and to pull three men out of four away from their homes. One of my ancestors, Henry Plimpton, sat in the legislature in 1853, but I doubt if his wife, Susanna, felt his opportunities for public service were greater in the State House than her own had been in organizing a new church and public library for her community.

Let me take a sample out of each generation to indicate how life changed for the women of this probably typical family.

The earliest one for whom a distinct picture of personality remains is Deborah Fisher (1739-1828). When she was a girl in Dedham, the passion of her life was to go to school, but no school was provided for girls then. She had to learn to read by asking questions and by studying alone, except for one winter when her father and some other men hired a teacher for a few girls. This accomplishment set her somewhat apart from her own generation—she

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became quite noted as the girl who could read, and used to be called on to comfort the sick by reading the Bible to them. But what sets her apart from our generation is her impressive list of household accomplishments. The year before she was married she raised a crop of flax, prepared it for spinning, and spun and wove sheets, pillowcases and ticking for mattresses and feather beds. At the same time, she raised sheep, prepared the wool and spun and wove her own bed blankets. Nor could life have become much easier for her after she married John Lewis in 1758, for the couple raised six children on the land and labor of their farm at Walpole, Massachusetts.

As is true for most people, it was her old age that showed the true texture of Deborah's character. After she broke her hip at the age of sixty, she could never walk again except by pushing a chair in front of her. Up to that time she had ridden horseback to church with a grandchild behind her. Yet for almost thirty years longer she maintained her cheerfulness and usefulness. Her greatgrandchildren could remember her at nearly ninety, sitting at her spinning wheel with her close white cap and clean checked apron. She still made thread for their sheets and towels, and mended the huge piles of clothes that were brought her from the clotheshorse, saying, "A stitch in time saves nine." Every evening she read her Bible, her "spiritual food"; and as long as she lived, the whole family loved to gather in her room to hear her stories or consult her about important decisions, "for she was aimiable and wise, and a referee in matters requiring wisdom and experience." A serene old age like this is no longer the easy outgrowth of a normal life. We might call this one test of a well-balanced society. Yet also by a more modern test, that of success, Deborah came through with colors flying; for her ideas, especially about education for girls, worked through the family clearly for at least four generations, and indirectly, of course, are still operating.

A very different set of problems confronted Ruth Allen (1768-1863) in the generation after Deborah's. Deborah's problem was to get an education; Ruth, on the other hand, was plunged into a pioneering situation and had to learn to live and make a living in it. As a marriage gift, her father, a Walpole carpenter, gave her

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a tract of land in Marlborough, New Hampshire, land which he probably acquired as a grant to Revolutionary veterans. In October of 1787, Ruth's fiancé, a young saddler named David Wilkinson, went up to get the land ready for his bride. He picked out a site for a house, cut the woods and burned them, built a log house, dug a well and sowed rye in the clearing. He and Ruth were married in the spring and set out for the new homestead with all their worldly goods on two horses. She carried a feather bed, linen and crockery on hers, while David loaded his with leather and tools for his trade. When they reached the log hut they found the rye as high as the roof, and at first they had to sleep in the loft at night, pulling the ladder up after them for fear of wolves.

It was not an easy thing to adjust to such an environment, and indeed, poor Ruth was so homesick that when her first baby was four weeks old she took her on her saddle and rode all the way back to her father's house, a distance of 125 miles. The tale says she reached home on the second night—which even for an unencumbered man would break most records. At home, apparently, no one either reproached her or urged her to return—these New Englanders had extraordinary respect for individuality—and probably because of that treatment, the time arrived when, as the record put it, "she could go back content."

"Content" for Ruth, nevertheless, always involved frequent visits to her first home; and she managed to make these profitable as well as pleasant by bringing down produce to sell. At first she sold woolen yarn and knitted socks, carried down like her babies on the saddle horse. On some of these trips she had the company of an old colored man, who immortalized himself in the family saga by remarking that he never knew before that white women had to go into the bushes. Later, when the road was built, she made her journeys in a large market wagon in which she carried eggs and butter. Her grandchildren used to enjoy their lively grandmother, and a trip in the old market wagon represented the high spot in their childhood. They also loved to listen to her jokes and stories, her favorite one being of how one night as a young girl she had entertained three young men at once without letting any of them know of the others' presence in the house. So we have a picture of

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another gay and entertaining old lady; even when she began to stumble she passed it off with the remark that she was still "spry." "She could fall down as quick as ever she could."

In the generation after this, life clearly became a little bit easier for women. There was a definite connection between the invention of baking soda, matches and "tin kitchens" (which stood up in front of the fireplace to roast meat) and the origin of women's clubs.

Nevertheless, as life became a bit more leisurely in the early 1800's, it also became more refined—and this meant a certain decline in spontaneity as well as rudeness, the beginnings of Victorian prudery. Instead of laughing heartily when the deacon, rising to pray in church, lost the narrow front piece of his pantaloons, the serious new generation would pretend not to notice. The temperance movement, too, began to gain headway, and there was a revival of the save-or-be-damned school of religious orthodoxy.

Still, the new life had new opportunities, and Susanna Gay (1796-1864) showed how they could be exploited as they came along. She married Henry Plimpton, a blacksmith's apprentice who bought a "water privilege" and started a small foundry. Susanna found herself called upon to run a general store in one wing of her house to accommodate the men who worked in the mill, and soon afterward she took charge of the books of the "Ladies' Literary and Moral Society" and thus, in effect, supplied the neighborhood with a public library.

The aim of this first women's organization in Walpole was to "promote a rational sociability" among the ladies of the church. To do this they met once a month at some member's house, and while one of their number read aloud from Sermons to Young Women or Hannah More's discourses on female education, the rest braided straw to be sold to hat factories. With the money thus earned they bought more books. So for the first time, women had practice in working together, in running an organization and handling the money they earned. This was a real innovation in the community, being different from anything the men had in their town meetings or militia practice—it was the beginning of the voluntary associations which handle so much of the sociability and so many of the good works in America today.

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In 1828, Susanna and some other souls in Walpole, outraged at the drift toward Unitarianism in the established church, decided to secede and form a more orthodox congregation. This was not so easy as it sounds, for the church was still part of the township and supported by taxation. In town meetings feelings grew bitter, and it was many years before any of the seceders could hope to win political office in town. Perhaps this was the reason why twenty women and only three men signed the first organization roll of the new church. (This is an interesting contrast to the South, where two generations later my husband's grandmother, a preacher's wife, felt it was neither necessary nor proper for women to organize anything, even a missionary circle.)

Susanna Plimpton was in the thick of all the work for the new church. She opened her home for Saturday prayer meetings and year after year was elected a directress of the new "Maternal Association." Gifted, capable, sociable, Susanna was the sort of person to whom her neighbors turned in any crisis. When she died, people somehow had the feeling that if she had not married so young she might have turned into a great intellectual figure. I do not believe she felt that way about herself. To be sure, she gave her daughters the best education then to be found and was undoubtedly pleased that one of them turned into a brave and successful missionary. At the same time, her letters show as much concern that the girls should wear sunbonnets to keep off freckles as that they should learn correct spelling. To me she seems more modern, combining interest in family and community, than many of the women who followed her in the latter part of the century.

For the girls who were born in the 1820's, the sweep toward Victorianism made life still more rarefied. No longer were they expected to play ball with the boys, or slide, or ride bareback after the cows, though they still did some of the milking. This was the first generation that did not have to learn to spin and weave—a heavy burden lifted; but at the same time, as part of the more earnest concern with religion, dancing went out for young people; and no more pranks, such as stuffing the pulpit Bible with a stack of playing cards, were played in church.

Nevertheless, there was still scope for energetic young women

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to use their abilities. Five girls were growing up at the Lewis farm at this time, and their great-grandmother Deborah was there to encourage their love of learning. The Lewises persuaded their neighbors to build a little schoolhouse nearby, with some parents giving labor and others giving materials. The children were trained meticulously in spelling and arithmetic, but their teacher also made them give reasons for what they knew. She introduced algebra, philosophy and astronomy, with a model of the solar system and a globe at her side. When Priscilla Lewis (1820-1889) went on from this school to Wheaton Academy, she was much surprised to find no equipment except blackboards, and hardly any books.

As the girls outgrew the neighborhood schools, they were sent away to the seminaries that were springing up all over New England. The very fact that they could be spared from home for a year or two at a time shows that women's work was getting lighter. The boys either could not be spared from the farm or were given vocational education for a trade, except for the few who went to Harvard to prepare for the ministry. So the women had a better liberal education on the whole than the men, a fact that is very evident from their letters. The girls had no chance to get lazy under this system, but their energies were not so completely taken up with the elemental struggle of food and clothing.

As the boys went to work at their trades, the girls too were able to find employment. Priscilla and all her sisters taught school before they were married, and thus represented the first generation for whom a paid job outside the home was freely available.

Marriage, however, still brought such formidable responsibilities for housekeeping that no one could have thought of continuing her job afterwards. Priscilla Lewis became engaged to Calvin Plimpton at the age of sixteen. Her younger sister remembered the courtship as follows: "The first time I suspected any devotion was when he offered me five cents to milk Priscilla's cows so she could go walking with him—then there was a picnic or something in Dedham and Calvin hired a team uptown. A remark there I remember by some prominent man, 'Calvin had a little the slickest team and a little the slickest girl in the crowd.' "During the interval of four years before they were married, Priscilla taught

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school and Calvin worked in his father's iron foundry and built an eight-room house for his bride.

Priscilla's life offered few conflicts, but increased leisure and refinement appear to have made new problems for her younger sister, Lizzie. Lizzie felt that life in the East was stagnant and that Walpole offered her neither culture nor adventure, so she toyed with the idea of going West. The Board of Education for the West, she says, offered "to find young ladies a home, pay their fare out, furnish part of their outfit and give a salary from seventy-five to three hundred dols. a year." Lizzie ended the letter outlining these plans plaintively, "I have no desire to be a burden to anyone. I hope I shall be wanted somewhere." This was a plea that would be echoed by energetic girls for the next three generations. Lizzie herself, however, never got West. Instead she went to Mount Holyoke, and soon thereafter married.

By the time my grandmother Idella Plimpton (1848-1941) was growing up, the changes in domestic work were coming faster and faster. Idella's father bought silks and muslins in Boston for making dresses, and the help of a seamstress was needed for making the elaborate modes of the day. Meanwhile the boys were beginning to buy their suits and overcoats in Boston. When his children were small, Calvin Plimpton used to go to a shoestore and bring out a huge box of assorted shoes, telling his nine young ones to pick out and keep whatever they could make fit. The family still grew a good share of food on their farm, but to vary the diet they had oysters by the barrel, raisins and figs by the basket, delicacies which Calvin would bring home from his business trips into the city. During this period too, the butcher wagon started coming around, making fresh meat available in seasons when no killings took place on the farm. These simplifications gave more free time for education (which now included the boys as well as the girls), travel, and those jobs outside the home which were still the expected occupation of a young girl before marriage.

At the age of fourteen, my grandmother lost her father; and her mother, Priscilla Lewis Plimpton, was left with a family in which her oldest boy was only twelve and the youngest, two. People told her she ought to sell her farm, but she believed that living there

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was good for the family and bravely put her twelve-year-old in charge of its operations. Meanwhile she kept up the family tradition of good education: her daughters went to seminaries which were soon to become colleges, while for the first time some of the boys went to college, and one son to medical school.

As for my grandmother, it happened that she was the first American college girl to spend her junior year abroad, for she was invited to go along with two of her Mount Holyoke teachers and another girl. In a way, this trip to Europe represented the flowering of the theory of education which the Lewises had been following for five generations. From the days when a desire for reading stirred in the heart of Deborah Fisher, every generation saw greater opportunity for its girls and rose to the occasion by giving it to them. Nowadays we are likely to think of 1870 as a time of formal manners, chaperons and great constriction for women. Nothing could be further from the truth about Idella's trip abroad. She moved with perfect spontaneity among young men and young women, never lacking a male escort, apparently never turning down a chance for strenuous fun such as walking over the Alps or through the dust of Vesuvius. During the winter, the Mount Holyoke party and three young American clergymen took an apartment together in Rome; and in a way they were freer than they might be today, for in the 1950's a mixed household of young unmarried persons might arouse suspicions which were warded off in those days by their perfect innocence. On the single occasion when Idella took some liberty with a young man which went beyond her teachers' idea of propriety (its exact nature unhappily shrouded behind an allusion in a letter), she was neither disciplined nor reproached but left to decide how she felt about it for herself. She probably felt pretty good; at least we have the young man's fervent assertion that he would commit the same indiscretion any time the future gave him an opportunity and his hope that she felt the same way. It is hard to see how anybody in any generation could have had more fun and friendship, or more freedom to learn about life.

Like her mother, my grandmother taught school until she was married and then devoted herself to bringing up her family. After that job was over, she was more or less retired to a position in which

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she was cherished and respected. Like her ancestress Deborah Lewis, she lived to be ninety, and also like her she was lame for the last thirty years of her life. I have no way of knowing whether she was as happy during those years, but certainly she was not nearly so much in the thick of family life and work. Deborah could help make important decisions for her family; but by 1920, so many of the questions that occupied the men of the family were in areas outside anything that Idella had ever encountered that often even whom to invite to dinner was not her decision.

The generation that was really put in a false position was that of my mother, Helen Kendall (1879-1913). She was sent to college, but not allowed to teach as she would have liked to do. Perhaps the men who kept her from it were right, for the women who did teach in that generation often did not marry. The world had time to waste now, and the men seemed to want women to be the ones to waste it. Some of them, like my mother, tried to keep busy with women's clubs and missionary study groups, and if she had lived longer I am sure she would have found more to do—but the point is that she had to look for it. The letters that passed to and from her Mount Holyoke classmates in the years following their graduation searched again and again the question of whether they were really justifying their education. For the first time a full job with full responsibilities was not pressed upon a girl. Other women in that period threw themselves into the fight for women's rights. They fought devotedly for this right, that their work should not be trivial—but in becoming serious, it somehow became forced. Very few women in that generation could sink back into any accepted role and feel natural.

This was why—when the 1920's came along—being good seemed less worthwhile than it had for generations. In a good society, virtue is quite literally its own reward; and by the same token, vice hardly needs inflicted punishment because it brings its own pain. When virtue goes stale, when its ordinary or expected rewards become too meager, then the hunt for fun—or fulfillment—becomes a matter of going after other rewards. A good deal of the fiction of the world, from *Tom Sawyer* to *Faust*, shows people in this predicament.

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Many things about our present society make our vices still precious to us. Nevertheless, it is eighty years since there has been as good a chance for men and women to live in the world as partners. It is not only that women won the right to go into parts of the world where men went, so that they now can think, talk and act in the same terms as their husbands, even if they do not work at the same type of job all their lives. Men are learning too-learning that they can, and in fact need to, help run their households; and the forty-hour week gives them a real chance to do so. The sort of work the world now requires is different from that of the days when Deborah Lewis wove her blankets and John Lewis made tallow candles on the same farm, but the mutual support and interest the two sexes can give each other are once more very similar. A few people, including some psychiatrists, still need to be convinced that women are not unsexed by being citizens, or men by taking active roles in their homes with their children. These two orientations have equal importance. Enough of a revolution has been accomplished, however, so that a person like me feels, in some ways, closer kinship with women three or four generations back than with the last two -even though we have every day to thank the mothers, aunts and grandmothers who tried to lay out new paths in which we can move today as happily as their mothers and grandmothers.

# American Scholar Forum .....

# THE FUTURE OF BOOKS IN AMERICA

This is the stenographic record of a discussion held at the home of Irita Van Doren, editor of the New York Herald Tribune book section, on Thursday evening, January 14, 1954. Present were the following persons:

LESTER ASHEIM KNOX BURGER HAROLD GUINZBURG John Hersey Walter Pitkin, Jr. Irita Van Doren

MRS. VAN DOREN: I think we are all aware that one of the big trends in publishing these days is the enormous growth of paperbacks. We are here this evening to discuss this trend and its effect. What paperbacks are doing to publishing today, how dependent trade publishing is on them, whether they're helpful or harmful—I'm going to ask each of you to express some opinion on this from your point of view.

Mr. Pitkin, let's start with you. I gather that you are very much interested in this paperback business and not entirely against hard-cover books. What have you got to say about it?

MR. PITKIN: That is right on both points. I am very sympathetic to the problem of the hard-cover book area, and am hopeful that the hard-cover field may be expanded more than it is at this time.

Would you like me perhaps to give some indication of the present status of paper-backed books?

Mrs. Van Doren: I think that would be good.

MR. PITKIN: I think that the best place to start perhaps is a simple arithmetical comparison between, let's say, 1946, which was the first postwar year, and 1953, just closed. I believe in 1946 there were roughly 60 million paperbacks run off and distributed. That doesn't mean that they were all sold. Sixty million were sent out to the wholesalers and others who put these books on sale. Some percentage was returned in that year, perhaps 10 or 15 per cent.

Mrs. Van Doren: What about 1953?

MR. PITKIN: In 1953, so far as we can tell, there were about 260 million taken off the presses, an increase of 200 million. Lord knows what percentage of the 260 million were returned. Certainly the sales in 1953, relative to the output, were lower—which is to say that the publishers are taking not just a higher return, but quite a good deal higher return of unsold copies

O LESTER ASHEIM is dean of the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago.

O KNOX BURGER is editor of First Editions (original soft-cover books), Dell Publishing Company.

<sup>•</sup> HAROLD GUINZBURG is president of the Viking Press.

<sup>•</sup> JOHN HERSEY is author of A Bell for Adano, Hiroshima, The Wall and the recently pullished The Marmot Drive.

O WALTER PITKIN, JR., is executive vice-president of Bantam Books, Inc.

from wholesalers. Partly because of competitive factors in the field, more titles are published than can ever be adequately displayed by the retailer.

Mrs. Van Doren: And you say part of the reason for that gap is competition: there are more and more soft-cover publishers.

Mr. Burger, you have to do with soft-cover publishing. What is your feeling about that?

MR. BURGER: I would agree with Mr. Pitkin that the turn-back of paperbacks has risen to proportions that are disturbing to a great many soft-cover publishers. I think there are probably too many titles put out. I heard a figure of 1,200 titles published in soft covers in 1953. I don't know if that is correct; that is an estimate. I think there are probably too many companies in the business. I think it was the wartime beginning and the postwar flush of success that made them grow too quickly and get out of bounds.

In the long run, any publishing enterprise or any production technique that makes available very large quantities of an item—particularly an item that has the cultural significance of a book—is good and ought to be fostered and somehow ought to win through the growing pains and difficulties that one encounters on the way up.

It is possible to compare books with the production of automobiles. One of the basic principles of America's beginnings is making available large numbers of needed and wanted articles, and a book is a manmade thing, useful, to a very great degree, to all sorts of people. Some time in the future there will be a shaking-down process: some people will get hurt, and I hope the writer will be hurt less than the publisher, frankly, but I think everybody is going to touch fire and draw back his hand to a degree.

The paperback business is here to stay and here to grow. That is for the same simple reason that more Chevrolets are sold than Chryslers.

Mrs. Van Doren: Mr. Guinzburg, from the publishers' point of view, the tradebook publishers', what do you think of the influx of paperbacks?

MR. GUINZBURG: I'm not at all sure that I have the right to answer that question from the point of view of trade-book publishers. I think I can answer it only in fairly personal terms, because I know I differ from some of my colleagues in the publishing field.

Offhand, no one can dispute what Mr. Burger has said about the desirability of more books being made available, and in fact what is happening today in the book field is in the pattern of what has happened to other articles in industry as a whole.

It does seem to me, however, that when we get into the realm of ideas we raise a whole set of problems that are not necessarily present when we are talking about automobiles or groceries or almost any of the other things that lend themselves to mass production and mass distribution.

My principal worry about what is happening in the book field is that the success of the paperback may push the whole book business in the direction of a mass industry. The characteristic of a mass industry is that it caters to the largest possible number of customers, and in that process may very well squeeze out those things that do not appeal to large numbers of people. My worry is that you may repeat in the book field what has happened in other fields—in entertainment and communication—you may make it increasingly difficult to do anything that is not geared to appeal to large low common denominators.

It remains to be seen, to be sure, whether it is the low, rather than the large, denominator that is going to govern. Already in this discussion, both Mr. Pitkin and Mr. Burger have referred to the fact that probably too many titles are now being published in the paperback field. It seems to me perfectly clear that if the numbers are going to be reduced, it is not necessarily going to be the poor-quality books that get eliminated; it may rather be those that are less salable.

At the same time, this is a danger: if the whole structure of book distribution shifts to be more and more dependent on the low-priced paperback, it may result in hard-back publishers finding themselves unable to publish much of what they now produce because—well, for a number of reasons. Among them is the possibility that the old-fashioned large bookstore that could carry a large range of assorted titles may find survival much more difficult. Therefore, there may be fewer means of distributing anything, let us say, that doesn't lend itself either to book club, paperback or other large-scale distribution, which would mean that we would find—

Mrs. Van Doren: Mr. Guinzburg, there are all sorts of angles to that, and I think it is a very important point you brought up. Let's go back to it in a minute, but right now let's ask Mr. Hersey how he feels paper-backed books affect the author.

Mr. Hersey: I would like to speak as Mr. Guinzburg did—for myself. I share some but not all of his worries. It seems to me that writing is a kind of reaching out and that the writer, the reacher, wants to touch somebody or something. And so it might be said that the more people he touches, the better; the more readers a book gets, the better; and I think that many writers welcome, are very glad to have, the enormous audience that paper-backed books have made possible.

A difficulty arises. I believe it stems from the relatively commercial nature of the paperback enterprise. Paper-backed books are distributed, as I understand it, through some 100,000, or perhaps even more, outlets. Mr. Burger already tonight has referred to the paper-backed book as an "item." At the meeting that the Authors' Guild had last spring on this problem, he said in passing that it is probably true that these books are less literature than they are (I think his words were) "a brazenly packaged commodity item." And I think that some of the difficulties, from the point of view of the writer who seeks this mass audience, come from the fact that because of the competition not only from magazines and other paper-backed books but from chewing gum, mints and toothbrushes, the paperback publishers have had to resort to more and more sensational devices.

No, I think you have to say now, "less and less sensational," but in the early years it was "increasingly sensational"—the use of lurid covers and blurbs, which did not reflect in all cases exactly what was in the book, but which were intended to attract the eyes of purchasers.

There are, as I understand it, about 2,000 good bookstores in the country. I don't share Mr. Guinzburg's worry that they will disappear, because I think when a person goes into a bookstore, he goes in to buy a book. When a person buys a paper-backed book, it may be only an auxiliary purchase.

I think there will always be readers and they will look for books wherever they are. The hope is that with an increasing readership which paper-backed books have helped to build, there will be more and more people going directly for books, and that it will be less and less necessary in the long run to use these—well, packaging techniques to attract them, and that there may be a more stable situation than we have at the moment.

Mrs. Van Doren: Mr. Asheim, you have heard all these different expressions from people who are in one way or another deeply concerned with book publishing. You have a somewhat more detached position, I believe. I wish you would comment a little, after having heard this, on what you think paper-backed books are going to do, how they're going to affect taste, American culture, if you will.

MR. ASHEIM: I'm afraid I'm not competent to deal with as large a subject as that. I would like to react, if I may, to just some of the things that have been said.

One thought that occurred to me immediately as Mr. Burger was speaking is that there seemed to be an underlying assumption that all books are an article of culture. This seems not to be the case. There are books and books. That being so, to create a large audience for the undifferentiated book may or may not be a contribution to the welfare of the community.

This leads us then immediately to make some kind of judgment about the value of the particular content, and it would seem to me that Mr. Guinzburg's distinction between the articles of commerce, "items," and the book as a medium through which ideas are conveyed makes clear what I think are two different levels on which books may be considered.

It seems to me that when we start dealing with the book as a medium for communicating ideas that are perhaps worth preserving—here I suppose my librarianship background comes in—we find that one of the functions of the book has been that it is a very excellent medium for preserving ideas. Tonight, however, we have been talking almost exclusively about the current market: what books will people buy and read right now? But it may take a long, long time for the ideas worth preserving in book form to be accepted or to reach the audience for whom they are intended. To emphasize the immediate market is not the best way to get to the ideas worth preserving.

The question that I would raise is whether the paper-backed book—and what we are really talking about here is not format, of course, but the means of production, the mass production, mass distribution—whether under such a system, the unpopular idea can be held long enough so that the audience that is interested in it will have a chance to know that it is there, to weigh it, to accept it or reject it over a time. As it is now, it seems to me that the mass audience must accept it immediately or this is the end of the idea and it doesn't find expression.

Mrs. Van Doren: You speak of one of the values of a book as a medium in which ideas can be preserved, the ideas that are worthwhile. There is also the need to get acquainted with ideas, and that can sometimes be done in a form that isn't lasting; and perhaps then the reader, if he really becomes interested, can find the book in more permanent form later.

Mr. Asheim: I don't know if I follow what other forms you suggest.

Mrs. Van Doren: The hard-cover book, which can be kept on the shelf or found in the library, after one has first been awak-

ened to an interesting idea perhaps in the soft-cover book.

MR. ASHEIM: This is possible, except again—and I think those who know about this ought to correct me if I'm wrong—the chance of coming across it in a soft-cover book is much less, just because the book remains available for so short a period. It is very difficult to get at everything that is in soft covers because those on display are constantly changing under the system of distribution which now obtains.

MRS. VAN DOREN: Perhaps one point you have suggested is something Mr. Pitkin might tell us a little more about—the different kinds of soft-cover books. We are assuming that they are all exciting and popular in some way, but there are different kinds.

MR. PITKIN: Indeed there are many different kinds of soft-cover books. We all, I think, very generally recognize that there are mysteries and westerns, of course, which are statistically a large part of the field, but there are also novels and books of nonfiction. And when we take an area such as the novel and examine it closely, we find that the variation there is as great as the variation within the whole field, because you find everything from the lowest grade of formula-writing—poor magazine writing—to the very best writing that is being done in this country today.

I think there are at least three publishers in the field, at least three important publishers, who are, to a degree, competing for what I consider to be the best sort of fiction—

Mrs. Van Doren: In the soft-cover field, you mean?

MR. PITKIN: Exactly. I think it is necessarily so; it is necessarily true that the total amount of the best writing that you will find in paper covers is small because there is not enough good writing being done. We are constantly on the lookout for better books of varying kinds. We don't want one book to be like another; but just as a hard-cover publisher, I am sure, always feels that there may be one or two books on his list for the spring or the

fall that stand out above the others, we find that when we go through all their lists and attempt to make the best list that we can, only a certain percentage of the books are truly outstanding as creative works.

We believe it is important to find such writing because—I believe this, in any case—the person who is looking for a book, whether it be in hard covers or in soft covers, wants something that is different from magazine fare.

In the area of non-fiction, we find an increasing amount of material available in soft covers. Many publishers today are increasing their non-fiction list, not only in the popular "how to do it" categories, but also in the areas of philosophy and other subjects of interest in adult education. I think the number of titles has gone up and the total sale of important and significant non-fiction has increased.

MR. GUINZBURG: Without going into the broad aspects, I would simply like to register a very strong dissent to what Mr. Pitkin just said, because, although I quite agree with him that a great many excellent books—a great many novels and a great many non-fiction books of the highest quality—have been done by the paperbacks, I think he's quite wrong when he says that they cover the whole range that is covered by hard-back publishing.

There are a lot of books—considered good by those who are supposed to know something about it—that often have sold very well in their original editions and simply won't be considered by any of the reprint publishers, for one reason or another. They'll say, "This isn't the sort of book that goes in our format." They will not say, "It is a bad book." They simply say, "This isn't the sort of thing that we can sell well."

Whether biography, essays or fiction—any hard-back publisher can, by going down his list, put his finger on author after author who is highly regarded, and, as I said, in many cases reasonably popular, who has had no reprints at all and who won't be considered by any of them.

Mr. PITKIN: I didn't intend that my last

remarks should be taken to mean that the paperback publishers cover the whole range of hard-cover books. That is not true, and it would be absurd to hold it true.

In the first instance, I was simply discussing fiction. I do agree with you that any publisher who has soft-cover books may say to you and will say to you and to other publishers of hard-back books that a particular book—some book that you like, and a good book, let us say—is not the sort of thing that he can sell in paperbacks. But the fact that he cannot sell it—or he, in his opinion, cannot sell it—does not mean that it can't be done. He is an individual publisher, just as you are an individual publisher, and I am sure that there are many books that you would like to publish but find yourself unable to publish. Let's be frank about this and say right away that different publishers have different talents. Some of the competitors of Bantam Books have people on their staffs who are able to see things and to analyze various areas of fiction and non-fiction which we are unable to handle; but we think there are things we can do that they can't do, and I think they'll admit that, too.

So you have these individual differences, and I think it's good to keep them in mind when we are discussing what can be done in the different areas of hard-cover and paper-backed publishing.

MR. ASHEIM: May I ask a question? I think Mr. Burger might tell us whether he means that he believes that in the future the paper-backed book will replace absolutely the hard-bound book along the whole range of publication. Or did you mean, Mr. Burger, that paper-bound publishing would be a growing phenomenon but that hard-bound books would always cover certain areas of publishing?

Mr. Burger: I would like to evade an immediate, direct answer to your question and maybe work around the bush. Certain of you have mentioned my own use of the phrase "an item" or "a commodity," and I was being deliberately and perhaps defensively hard-boiled about the distribution and the marketing methods for these books.

I feel that the increased number of read-

ers is a forward move made by the paper-backed book business. Mr. Hersey said that he understood that there were 2,000 good bookstores. I don't believe that the American Booksellers Association would agree with those figures. I don't think that there are that many by a good deal. I think they have been diminishing. I think this is very sad, but it happens to be a fact. There are well over 100,000 outlets for soft-cover books. The inventories are very badly kept. There are far too many titles. There is too much competition for the limited space available.

I do not think of books as "items" comparable to chewing gum. I hope I know the difference between a good book and so-called category fiction. I have read a great many of the former and, like most editors, have bought a good deal of the latter.

I think that in the scramble to see these books sell—I am not directly connected with the selling of the books and I am not a publisher, nor a distributor, nor really qualified to speak authoritatively about what sells and what does not sell-in this scramble, which is obviously taking place, I think publishers are being pushed (I mean soft-cover book publishers are being pushed) to exploit the opportunity and try to reach more and more kinds of people. I think that there is an increasing number of books available for 25 to 50 or 80 cents which are not aimed at the man who has come to a drugstore to buy a pack of chewing gum.

Anchor Books are a case in point. Many of the Mentor Books are another case in point. I think that the mass distribution techniques have inspired the cheap reproduction of the world's great treasures, artistic and literary.

To give you a fact about this thing currently, there are several strong indications that the poorer quality books, the books that exploit the lowest possible common denominators, hitting the same nerves over and over again, are hurting the publishers more than the more varied—the more esoteric, if you will—and I think Mr. Pitkin will probably agree.

I have in mind a particular publisher, whom I shall not name, who has material piling up in warehouses, returned copies, a good deal more than the rest of us: his whole slant and approach have been to hit the lowest common denominator. It doesn't displease me that he is hurt to the degree that he is said to be.

Mrs. Van Doren: Do you get reports from authors, through the Authors' Guild, Mr. Hersey, that their books in original hard covers are helped or picked up again by a later soft-cover publication job?

Mr. Hersey: It has been a fairly generally accepted idea for a number of years that in those cases where a book is held for soft-cover publication for two or three years after its original hard-cover publication, there may be a renewed sale that comes probably mostly from the sales of soft-cover books in areas where there are no bookstores at all.

Mrs. Van Doren: But they are not waiting two years now to put a book into soft covers as a rule.

Mr. Hersey: Some publishers still are.
Mr. Burger: Does it not depend upon the book?

Mr. Hersey: Yes, of course. Taking up what Mr. Burger said, I think it is certainly true that some remarkable books, some remarkably good books, are getting on the soft-cover publishers' list now.

I wonder whether part of the difficulty that soft-cover publishers are now facing, from what you said earlier, Mr. Burger, may not come from the kind of illusion that the mass-distribution, mass-production method of paperback sales brought about in the early days when the field was not quite so crowded and there were 150,000 or 200,000 places to sell a book. It was possible in the early days to send out 200,000 copies of a book and be fairly sure that most of them would be sold.

It turned out in the early days that that was even true of books which were not mysteries, westerns and so on. It turned out that books could be distributed and sold even if they were novels and in many cases fairly good novels.

But many new firms have come into the

field, and now perhaps it has turned out that the audience for good books is not so solidly developed as we hoped it was; the illusion that anything could be sold has had to give way. Perhaps the new reading audience needs time to catch up with the new quality it is being offered.

Mr. Burger: It may well be.

MR. PITKIN: I can pick up right there, if I may. I'm sorry to say that I think there was a time when the audience was miles ahead of the publishers. I have been in the soft-cover book field since 1939 and full-time since 1941, and I don't think anything goes back of 1939 in this country.

I think there was a dividing line in 1947 in the world of soft-covers. Down to that time the soft-cover book was looked upon purely as a book, whether it was a mystery or a novel like Mark Twain's Life on the Mississippi, which was published among our first releases.

But in 1947, a number of things started to happen. For the first time we tried adaptation of magazine art on the covers of small books; Bantam Books was the innovator in this particular instance. Thereafter, because results were so good, all the firms went over exclusively to magazine art from the earlier form of more or less abstract representation or typographical covers or simply cartoons or line drawings of one kind or another.

Sales had been growing until then and continued to grow in the aggregate; and it was only two and a half years later that one publisher came into the field with books that weren't books at all, but were simply what I call magazine formula material expanded sufficiently to fill out 160 pages.

Now I believe that down to 1947—and I draw the line very conveniently there, though it may not be too accurate to insist upon that—I believe that down to 1947, everybody who had read a paperback thought of them simply as books at a lower price.

I am very sorry, but I don't believe they think this today. I think that a very important part of our market or our potential market now thinks of paperbacks as lovgrade magazine material.

Mrs. Van Doren: That is an unfortunate trend, if it is true.

MR. PITKIN: I hope it is a trend that it now being reversed. I happen to agree with Mr. Hersey that, for example, the illustrations being used generally on paperback covers are not sensational to the degree that they were, and as a matter of fact, think that many publishers are now thinking about the abandonment of the adapted magazine illustration for the cover.

At the same time, the publisher who has gone most deeply into the magazine formula book is the publisher who is feeling most severely the effects of the present poor market in paperbacks.

Mrs. Van Doren: Larger returns?

MR. PITKIN: Larger returns and smaller sales. It has become quite fashionable to talk about the problems of the hard-cover publisher; I think it's going to be a little more fashionable in 1954 to talk about the problems of the soft-cover publisher.

Mrs. Van Doren: Mr. Guinzburg looks rather happy over there.

MR. GUINZBURG: I think that maybe we are spending a little too much time and emphasis on the year 1954 and its problems with this current over-supply that some publishers are feeling more than others. It is a very short-range problem.

These things happen in all sorts of busnesses. Whether the paperback publishers are raising their standards and changing their covers is also a little too new. They may be doing this because there has been a lot of censorship around the country, or it may be a permanent policy, but it seems to me that we cannot talk too intelligently about something that is true of only the current months.

It seems to me that the long-range problems, which may be very difficult to analyze, are nevertheless much more interesting and important.

Mrs. Van Doren: I agree with you, and I wish we would talk a little about them.

Mr. Hersey: Well, before we go to that, I would like to pick up one thing that Mr. Guinzburg said in passing, about the at-

tempts to censor certain kinds of paperbacked books.

I think there are indications in this area of censorship that tend to show that the paperback audience is not yet the same audience as that for the hard-cover books. Indeed, there are some curious differences in this area of censorship. Salinger's novel The Catcher in the Rye sold, I think, about 45,000 hard-cover copies, and when distributed by the Book-of-the-Month Club sold about 150,000. It was bought by libraries all over the country and was favorably reviewed; and so far as its hard-cover life is concerned, there were, to my knowledge, no questions asked about immorality and so on. But when it got into paperbacks it ran into trouble in many cities over the country, even though its jacket, by the way, was not gaudy. I gather that the censoring body known as the Georgia Literature Commission held hearings on the book, and that it was banned by police chiefs and citizencensors in several cities.

Why the difference in this treatment between hard-cover and paper-backed book?

MR. ASHEIM: I think that is a typical phenomenon in censorship. The larger the potential audience, the more restricted the subject matter—just as you can say in a book things that you cannot say on the stage when a stage version is made of it. And you can say on the stage some things that cannot be said on the screen.

Mr. Guinzburg: And on the screen, things that cannot be done on television.

MR. ASHEIM: It is not a matter of books or the format, but rather that the potential audience is much greater, that the price is low, and that therefore youngsters may be reached as well as adults. At least this is the rationale that is put forward when a book which has been going around for years in hard covers with no trouble at all suddenly becomes banned when it is put into a paper cover.

Mr. Hersey: I think this is probably a big factor, but I think it is probably more complex than that, because many of the books which have run into censorship trouble in paperback form have been the relatively good books—that is to say, books

which are more or less in the classic area rather than the really sensational books. And there have been cases of straight pornography published (not by these gentlemen, I am sure) in paperback form which have not run into censorship, while books by Faulkner, Caldwell and many others have been stopped.

Now, there's a qualitative factor, some kind of cultural factor that operates in censorship—goodness knows. Mickey Spillane is better known to some of our youngsters than Salinger.

Mr. Asheim: The question I raised is whether this is a reflection of the reading audience, which I think is the underlying assumption, or whether a particular group sets itself up to censor.

Mrs. Van Doren: You mean that the group that sets itself up to censor is assuming that the large audience is going to be offended or hurt or something like that?

Mr. Asheim: That's right.

Mr. PITKIN: I think it is a non-reading group.

MR. BURGER: Yes, and they erupt like boils in towns all over the country, and all it takes is half a dozen clubwomen and one chief of police and you have a big censorship problem.

The best book I have had, in my opinion, is a book that was read in advance of publication by one of Mr. Guinzburg's authors, John Steinbeck, and he was kind enough to say a good word for it. We put his endorsement on the cover. It has gotten very good reviews universally, and yet it has been banned in Detroit—I assume because of the inclusion of a four-letter word know by every schoolchild.

The book is by no means an attempt to titillate. It is by no means salacious. It is by no means offensive to morals. It is a story of tremendous courage.

The censors who set themselves up must find handles, and they must set up various rules, special lines beyond which the publishers shall not go; and if a writer or a publisher knows those rules, he can dodge in and out and put out very meretricious material and still not get banned. I've seen it happen time and again.

MR. PITKIN: As to your question as to why it is that Mickey Spillane runs into little or no trouble and books of real literary stature and genuine merit seem to run into somewhat more trouble, I think it can be said that the people who are most interested in censorship and the activators are those who are concerned with thought control. They wish to enforce a kind of conformity on our society, and it is not surprising, if that is so, that they see little to complain about or be uneasy about in Mickey Spillane.

Mr. Hersey: I still think that the gentlemen who publish paper-backed books have to take some responsibility in this area, because they have helped to build up a large new audience. One of the reasons why the censors are interested—it has been built up primarily, or at least most noticeably, on books that are sensational literature. That has been the main reason why censorship has been turned to the paper-backed books, along with comic books and some of the more sensational moving pictures, as main targets of its attack.

It does seem to me a different audience from the hard-cover one. The paper-cover audience has defined itself by buying so many books—as David Dempsey of the New York Times said at that same meeting last spring—on sex, sensation and statutory rape.

MR. PITKIN: I am sure there are publishers of hard-cover books that Mr. Guinzburg would hesitate to shake hands with. He can correct me if I'm wrong. There are also publishers of paper-backed books with whom I would hesitate to pass the time of day or be seen with on the street.

I don't like to be roped into a group with my neighbor unless I think my neighbor is a man like me, and I assume that Mr. Burger would feel also that it is not actually fair to look at this field and condemn it on the basis of some sensational books.

I happen to agree with you, however, that some of the most notorious books that have been published have made it much easier for the censors to pick on all paper-backed books, because there has been a tendency to lump paperbacks together—

and I think they in fact do lump them to gether. I think they should be stopped fron doing so; I think it is an error for us who are in this room to do so.

Mrs. VAN DOREN: Don't you think the reason for the tendency to lump them to gether is that they've sprung up so fast?

MR. PITKIN: And because they are all fo sale in the corner drugstore and cand store.

Mrs. Van Doren: And at a small range of price.

Mr. PITKIN: Exactly.

Mr. Guinzburg: I don't think it is sur prising that this has happened. As long a the books were selling at a reasonably high price, they were going almost entirely to sophisticated, educated people who wen into bookstores or belonged to a book club Suddenly these same books, often with luric covers, are available for sale at candy stores And when a great many people who've no knowledge of books go in for a coke and suddenly come upon this rack full of luric looking things available for a quarter to their kids, then they get upset. They don' know enough to distinguish. They don' know enough to say, "Well, some of these may be very good and some may be ver bad." They are outraged by the total thins that they have seen.

I'm not defending censorship, but I thinl it is perfectly understandable with this new display on every corner. People should worry about it, but should not be dismayed about it.

MR. PITKIN: It is quite understandable.
MR. BURGER: I think it should be pointed out for the record that about 90 per cent of the books that are on the NODL [National Organization for Decent Literature] banned list, and most other books that have run into trouble in the various communities where there is censorship, are reprints of trade editions which were not considered to be questionable.

Let us not put the rap on soft-covers, for most of them are reprints. Even Mickey Spillane is not an original soft-cover writer

Mr. Hersey: That is true, but the poin I made before still holds, that they are no

censored as hard-covered books, for reasons we have discussed.

Mr. Burger: Sure.

Mrs. Van Doren: Mr. Guinzburg, let's get back to some of the questions you raised just now of the future possibilities and future tendencies, dangers and benefits in all this. That may be more fruitful than some of the present discussion.

Mr. Guinzburg: Well, to go back to some of the more general things. At the beginning of our discussion, the paperback publishers here pointed out the limitation on the number of copies that can be absorbed as far as we know at present by the stationery store, the newsstand, the limited space outlets, in which these books are sold. To be sure, this may change in the future, but that is the present system, a system in which a certain number of square feet are given to this merchandise that might be given to candy bars or something else.

These books are sold at a very low margin of profit to the dealer. That means in turn that it is inevitable that there is no expert advice available; nobody who sells these books can afford clerks who know what is inside of them. These books must sell themselves from their title, their cover, the author's name occasionally. That is the nature of this form of distribution. Now, if it is true that the number of titles that can be handled adequately is limited, and if we don't see any mechanism for keeping them, as Mr. Asheim pointed out before, in permanent or more or less permanent supply, as a great many hard-cover books are, you may very well find that there is only room in this type of outlet for the quick-selling, short-lived book. It may be a very good book; it may be a very bad book.

One of the great problems, as I see it, is what happens to everything else. The bookstore has been declining as an outlet. This year, in New York City, what used to be the two biggest outlets have contracted. Brentano's has given up part of its main store and Macy's has moved its book department from the ground floor to an upstairs floor. This is indicative of what is happening throughout the country.

There are very few new bookstores being

started. Those that are being started are much more likely to be smaller stores in a busy neighborhood, which inevitably will handle only the reasonably popular things because they're not like the old-fashioned bookstore that had a large, slow-moving stock; and I think every hard-cover publisher will tell you that it is more and more difficult to get any distribution for any book on his list that isn't in one way or another conspicuous—isn't by a famous author or in some way sensational.

Now remember also that, just as in everything else, costs in publishing have gone up enormously, without a commensurate increase in sale which might have offset the higher costs. It is constantly becoming more difficult for a hard-cover publisher to publish the books which he thinks he would like to publish, which he thinks in some way are worth publishing.

If this goes on, if these trends continue—and I don't blame them entirely on paper-backed books, I merely think they are an important factor in the picture—if these trends continue, you are simply going to have fewer and fewer books being published.

Now people may very well say, "Aren't there too many books being published anyway?" Publishers answer, "Yes, there are," but no two will agree on which ones need to be dropped, and one of the glories of book publishing has been that it's been the one medium in which something that somebody wanted to write could be made available to a relatively small number of people.

I gloomily predict that this will decrease, and it will be harder and harder to do that sort of publishing. In fact, it may become impossible to do it except on a subsidized basis, and although I don't object to the sort of subsidy that is very nobly used by the university presses in many cases and by various other learned groups, I think there is an enormous loss to culture if fewer voices can be heard expressing themselves through books.

Mrs. Van Doren: Isn't it also true, though, Mr. Guinzburg, that many publishers feel that they couldn't publish some books, perhaps even what they consider

very good books, if they did not have the chance of the extra income from a cheap paper edition?

MR. GUINZBURG: Of course, it is true. But may I cite one example of a discussion something like this that I was in a while ago, when one of the reprint publishers not present tonight ran to the defense of the paperback and the work which reprint publishers can do? He used the example of Mr. William Faulkner. He pointed out what a small sale he had had and how at last, through inexpensive books, Faulkner was reaching a wide market. This is undoubtedly true. I don't blame him for using that to support his position. It's a very fine case.

The thing I worry about, however, could be explained in terms of that example. I remember that Mr. Faulkner had a very difficult time being published—or I should say, his publishers had a very difficult time publishing him—over the period of a number of books. And I think we have to ask ourselves whether there may not be the next Faulkner, now in his twenties, unable to find a publisher at all because hard-cover publishing by itself is so much more difficult. One can think of the editorial meeting in which somebody says: "Well, yes, this youngster has got an awful lot of talent. But gosh, no book club sale, no reprint sale ---we'll probably sell 1,122 copies of this. We can't do it."

MR. ASHEIM: This is a question I wanted to raise earlier about the situation if paperback mass distribution took over.

It is quite true that paper-bound books now contain titles of considerable stature, but the question is whether they would have ever got into paperbacks without their original publication in hard covers. In other words, what are the chances in 1980 for that year's Kafka or Joyce or Virginia Woolf to get published when fiction is published only on a mass-distribution level?

MR. BURGER: This is certainly a very relevant question. I would like to give two examples from my own list of inventory.

One is a book by a young man in his early thirties—a rather quiet and serious novel. His first book was published by Scribner's and was well received critically;

it didn't sell many copies. Well, I have undertaken to publish this second book; and I confess he has put a title on it which, while very apt for the book and a fine, symbolic and right title, is also a selling title. If I seem cynical, I am sorry, but I feel that this title will carry the book. I think the book is not a natural for mass distribution, but, taking a deep breath, I'm going to do it.

I suspect it might be a book about which many trade publishers today would go through the routine that Mr. Guinzburg has just gone through: "We can't get Book-of-the-Month Club. We may not be able to sell subsidiary rights. Well, can we afford to do it?"

I have a degree of faith that it is not going to fall back on my publisher and handicap him with return copies, nevertheless it's a chance I'm taking; and actually we're putting much more money into the first printing of this book than a trade publisher would be putting into a similar book, for he might be printing 3,000, and our economics is such that we must do a printing of 200,000 or 300,000.

Another book that I have—I might say in the confines of this room that I got only by accident—is a book that should have gone to Mr. Guinzburg or another trade publisher, given the present situation of distribution of paper-backed books and their relatively low degree of literary acceptance. It happened to come to me. It's a book, I feel, that almost any trade publisher would be very happy to publish. It's a first novel, and it would sell many copies for the trade publishers and would get good reviews and perhaps bring a very high price from such reprint publishers as Mr. Pitkin and others. Now, given the present set of circumstances, I will try to arrange some kind of trade publication for this book almost entirely because of the author. I feel that he deserves a hearing in the present complex of soft- and hard-covers. I think he needs to get into hard-covers for the benefit of the reviews he might get and the chance of making the best-seller lists.

I fully expect that there will be a day when, as in France, there will be original publication of first-rate, major new novels in soft covers.

This brings me back to the distribution techniques, a basic question. They may well be in need of revision. I think the possibility of mail order is only just beginning to be exploited. I think the possibilities of the specialized book in a specialized market, while not to be done in lots of 200,000 and 300,000, are perhaps good for 20,000 to 50,000 to 80,000—I think we'll be driven to that and I think it's a fine thing that we'll be driven to it.

Mrs. Van Doren: Well, what about Ballantine, in his new plan of publishing hard-covers and soft-covers at the same time, or soft-covers in conjunction with some trade publisher who will simultaneously get out a hard-cover edition?

Mr. Burger: I don't know about the feasibility of publishing the same—forgive me—"item" at \$2.50 and again at \$.25, \$.35, or \$.50. The fact that the same book is obtainable at one-tenth of the price is going to hurt terribly when you try to charge \$2.00, \$3.00 or \$5.00 for it simultaneously. I don't think this situation will obtain for long, but if a book deserves to be reviewed, and if sales are increased because of good reviews, under the present circumstances I think a publisher should take it upon himself to try to arrange for hard-cover publication.

Mr. PITKIN: It seems to me that Mr. Burger has stated a personal attitude in relation to the problem that Mr. Guinzburg posed. I don't think that that reaction, laudable as it is, is in point of fact an answer to the kind of situation which Mr. Guinzburg foresees as a possibility at least.

Mr. Guinzburg: His cases may be good, but I think he puts them as exceptions rather than as an indication that the basic point I made is not valid.

MR. PITKIN: I would regard them at least as exceptions, and I have some reasons for looking upon them in this light. One of them is that, as Mr. Burger says himself, there are too many publishers in the paperback field; and yet at the moment there are really only about fifteen to twenty firms operating at a good margin, and eight of them

don't count because they're simply taking any kind of low-grade material they can lay their hands on and getting it on the stands.

Mr. Burger: They count to the customer.

MR. PITKIN: Quantitatively and statistically only, and what we're left with is a situation in which you have ten or twelve publishers at the outside who are the least bit concerned with any of the problems we have discussed here this evening.

On the other hand, Mr. Guinzburg is in a field where there are—I don't know the figures exactly—well, how many trade publishers would you say there are, Mr. Guinzburg? Upward of fifty?

MR. GUINZBURG: Yes. Actually I think it's eighty that belong to the Book Publishers Council.

Mr. Asheim: There are thirty of them that actually publish five titles during the year.

Mr. Guinzburg: Many more than that. Mr. Pitkin: It would seem so.

I happen to think that the question we have been discussing here tonight, the future of hard-back books as against the future of paper-backed books, is really the question of the future of reading in America. I wonder how many people in this room saw a survey that Dr. Gallup put out in November. I think it was most likely in the New York World-Telegram and syndicated. It showed that in the United States, 17 people out of 100, 17 per cent, when interviewed said they were reading a book. In England, 55 per cent said they were reading a book. That may strike you as a shocking comparison, but I think a more dangerous fact is inherent in another figure, which I think was that a year or two ago in this country 22 per cent said they were reading a book, whereas today only 17 per cent were. I don't know whether those figures are actually indicative of how many people are in point of fact reading books, but I am afraid they are indicative of opinion; and I'm afraid that reading books is a little less respectable than it was two or three years ago, and it is a lot less respectable here than it is in England.

I think it is this kind of problem that we

are all dealing with as we look at our own business problems or our problems as writers.

I would like to know—I don't know if there's anybody in this room who can shed any light on this—but I would like to know how Americans can be interested in more and better books and how book-reading can be made a more respectable pastime than it apparently is today.

Mrs. Van Doren: I am surprised that you use the word "respectable."

MR. PITKIN: Well, I wanted to use the word "respectable" because I thought about it, and I'm sticking to it. I think that the whole climate of anti-intellectualism in this country, which I am afraid has been reinforced considerably in the last four or five years, is closely involved with concepts such as respectability. I just happen to think that if reading books were a more respectable occupation, or pastime, or whatever you choose to call it, more people would identify the thing they were reading as a book, and you'd get a higher figure than 17 per cent.

MRS. VAN DOREN: You don't think it is just a question of other forms of entertainment that are cutting into reading?

MR. PITKIN: I think that that question exists importantly, but I don't think it is just that question. I know too many people who would rather just not be seen with a book and would rather say, as in the case of a printer that I know, a well-educated man, "We print them; we don't have to read them too, do we?"

Mrs. Van Doren: Surely that question does not mean that the printer was thinking of respectability.

MR. PITKIN: I'm afraid it enters into it.

Mr. Asheim: There's no implication in what you said, though, that in fact paper-bound books have had any effect in the drop in respectability?

Mr. PITKIN: No, I didn't mean to imply that.

Mr. Asheim: In other words, this is a separate problem, that is not related to one or the other method of publication.

MR. PITKIN: I think anti-intellectualism,

as a matter of fact, predated paperbacks. The forces already existed in this county which are pointed toward less emphasis on education beyond a grade-school level, or at least on educational content beyond that level.

Mrs. Van Doren: On the other hand the amount of reading of non-fiction books—biography, history, public affairs—has in creased steadily while other reading has gone down.

Mr. Guinzburg: You say "increased" - 1 think we ought to consider the term "in crease" in relative rather than in absolute terms. Think of what has happened in this country in the twentieth century in terras of the growth of the well-to-do, literate, leisured population; of a population that has doubled; of the educational level, which has increased so fantastically that there are at present five times as many people in col leges as there were in high schools at the beginning of the century; of the leist of time that has increased tremendously, and all the ease of life—then ask yourself if the reading of non-fiction books has increased or kept anything like the pace of the in creased potential that we might have expected in the light of those circumstances. No, I believe you get a very discouraging picture, instead of an optimistic one.

MRS. VAN DOREN: I think that is tree, Mr. Guinzburg, but it is a fact that the reading of fiction has gone down in the same period; and though reading of serious non-fiction books may not have increased as it should, the reading of fiction is relatively in a much worse state.

Mr. Burger: How about the writing of fiction?

MR. PITKIN: I would like to ask Mr. Guinzburg a question. I really have only an impression here, and no exact inforcation, but I'd like to know whether any capansion that has taken place in the reading of hard-covered non-fiction hasn't been in the purely inspirational and non-informational books.

Mr. Guinzburg: I think you're quile right. I think that there are a great may kinds of non-fiction that actually sell less

well than they used to. I think the total of non-fiction has increased, but that is only true of certain kinds.

Mr. PITKIN: Would you say generally of the less profound variety?

MR. GUINZBURG: I think it's frightfully hard to make that sort of qualitative judgment.

Mr. Burger: I do know that in going back over the best-seller lists, back to the turn of the century, you will find certain inspirational material and self-help books of a so-called spiritual nature prominently featured.

Mr. PITKIN: That's a recurrent phenomenon

Mr. Burger: And that has been constantly so with the growth in population.

Mr. Hersey: Don't TV and other cultural factors tend somewhat to decrease reading in the country generally, outside the province of our discussion? It seemed to me that Mr. Burger made some interesting points earlier that may be germane—when he talked about the need for renewed scrutiny of the distribution methods in the paperback field. Evidently, from what Mr. Guinzburg said, that may also be necessary in the hard-cover field; and maybe there is some new kind of publishing that we had better think about for the future, to reach those readers we still have.

Mrs. Van Doren: Have you any ideas at all as to what sort of publishing that would

Mr. Hersey: I would like to ask Mr. Burger whether thinking is being done in the paperback field about the subject of distribution. Are there any discussions among publishers or in the industry?

Mr. Burger: I operate peripherally at that level, and I cannot give you any definitive answers. I do know that at my level, as an editor, this problem is becoming more acute. And as far as all the techniques of publishing are concerned, I am sure that over half of the thirty to eighty trade publishers that Mr. Guinzburg and Mr. Asheim spoke of exist only because of selling subsidiary rights. They would be out of business were it not for this. I think that such a

system is somehow bound to get revised and get controlled differently.

The soft-cover publishers have grown up in two different ways, as I see it—little as I know of it. One—Mr. Pitkin's Bantam Books is an example—has been an expansion of interest among various trade publishers, an attempt to capture a new market, to exploit new techniques. Then there is the line of books put out by the publishers for whom I work, for example. This line is an outgrowth of a mass distribution of periodicals, of a massive operation which is very costly. They want to keep the machinery going. They must find the best ways to keep up with what is being done in techniques; and they think more in terms of the point of sale and of the presses and the sales channels—not like the Bantam operation, which started from a publisher's office, where they're thinking directly of the reader.

As far as new techniques for distributing these books go, there are certain signs either for better or worse. There is Anchor Books; there is the new line called Key Books. The first two titles had to do with the life of Gandhi by Louis Fischer and a "success-in-marriage" book. Well, I will put up with every success-in-marriage book if you get an intelligent life of Gandhi to go along with it.

Ballantine has quietly put its books into two different mail-order systems. Obviously, they are for category fiction, the western and science fiction, but a feeler is being put out in this direction.

MR. GUINZBURG: Mr. Burger has mentioned Anchor Books, which was mentioned once before. It seems to be somewhat out of the category we were talking about, because Anchor Books, as I see it, is not really a mass-medium operation. It is an attempt to do relatively inexpensive books for specialized markets, and consequently has to charge three or four times as much as the mass-medium operation does. It is much more on a book basis than on a magazine basis. It is not really in the same class with soft-cover publishing, because the whole distribution method—

MR. BURGER: It is a distribution method with which I am not entirely familiar, but in the neighborhood where I live there are two newsstand outlets for Anchor Books which also feature Dell Books, Bantam Books, Signet Books, etc. Assuming that trade publishing is over here on the right at \$4.00, and Anchor Books here in the middle at \$.80 or \$.90, and over here the reprints and the soft-cover originals at \$.25, \$.35 and \$.50—I would still say that Anchor Books are closer to the soft-covers than to the trade books.

Mr. Asheim: Again the thing that concerns me is that Anchor Books are reprints. These have been established by hard-cover publishing and identified with an audience. They are now being brought back into print in an inexpensive format because they are already established. They are not experimenting with new writers.

Mr. Burger: Do you think that will never come about, that there is a good argument against it?

Mr. Hersey: It seems to be almost impossible to imagine a Kafka or a Joyce or a Virginia Woolf, to use the examples that Mr. Asheim used, being first sprung at a mass audience. By the very nature of experimental writing, to approach that—

MR. BURGER: In the case of Anchor Books, they are reprints, they are classics, and they are books that every educated person would be drawn to, has read or would want to read, and would want to own. I don't know what their print orders are—do you know?

Mr. Guinzburg: They say they have a 20,000 break-even point.

MR. PITKIN: I think their print orders are in the range of 20,000 to 30,000.

MR. BURGER: That may be; and they may go under, Ballantine Books may go under, all kinds of books may go under. But I still think that paperback publishers are going to have to continue searching for more and better ways to bring a greater variety of books to people who read, whether they put out 30,000 or 300,000 copies. Discovery and New World Writing are cases in point.

MR. HERSEY: While we are on the earnomics of books, I've waited a very long time to say something that is not news to either of you gentlemen who are in the paperback field—namely, that authors feel very strongly that their share of profits from paper-backed books is not so great as it ought to be.

I don't know whether you know of the standard royalty arrangement, Mr. Asheirs. It is 4 per cent to the author and the original publisher on the first 150,000 copies and 6 per cent thereafter. Those royalties are generally shared equally between original publisher and author, and therefore the author's royalty from the paper-backed bools is 2 per cent on the first 150,000 and 3 per cent thereafter.

The royalties on hard-cover books start at 10 per cent and generally go to 15 per cent on a sliding scale. Ballantine Books 5 paying authors 8 per cent on its paper-backed editions. Authors are quite aware of the differences between the economics of publishing paper-backed books and that of hard-cover publishing. Nevertheless, write 3 generally feel that the paperback companies can pay a more substantial royalty than they are now paying.

Mrs. Van Doren: There is one phase of this that hasn't been mentioned at all. We have talked on publishing problems; we have talked about the author's problems; but no one has mentioned the reader and what advantage he may get out of being able to buy a cheaper book.

It is true that he can get a very bad cheap book, but he can also get a very good one; and it seems to me that, on the whole, the advantage to the reader is very significant.

Mr. Hersey: Could I start that of? A though I have been attacking paperback publishing fairly consistently, as a reader I think it is a wonderfully valuable thing.

I started reading paper-backed books in European and English editions before the were very widely published here, and have ever since, whenever I could, bought a paper-back in preference to a hard-cover book.

One of the difficulties again lies in dis-

tribution, because it is not only hard but sometimes impossible to get the book you want in the paper-backed edition. If you go to a drugstore or to your local outlet for paper-backed books, the chance that the title you want will be there is slight. Mr. Asheim spoke earlier of the perishability of the paper-backed books, because they move through so fast.

Even when you have read an announcement of a recent publication in paper-backed books, it is often very hard to find the book you want. So, from the reader's point of view, there's a kind of chancy nature about the purchase of paper-backed books.

Mr. PITKIN: I think that is certainly true. One thing that hasn't been mentioned tonight that is taking place in this country is an increase in the number of outlets—I don't mean to say tens of thousands, but I think probably a few thousand—which are specializing in paper-backed books where you can find not a hundred titles, as you can perhaps in your corner drugstore, but where there are five hundred and even a thousand titles.

I saw such an outlet in Topeka, Kansas, very recently; that one store sold roughly 25 per cent of all the paperbacks sold in the city of Topeka. Well, that made it, I think, one of the big bookstores in the United States in terms of unit sales, though not in terms of dollar sales. There is in many cities today an outlet comparable to that one, and I think there's a trend in that direction.

MR. ASHEIM: I just want to underline what Mr. Hersey said about the difficulty of finding a particular title in a paper-backed edition. I think there are two reasons: one is this problem of distribution. If you look for it immediately after publication, it may not be there; and if you go back three weeks later, it's already gone and won't be replaced.

In addition, the fact that these outlets are manned by people who are not interested in books means that they have no knowledge of the books that they have, no interest in getting the title for you, no way

of knowing how to go about it even if they were interested. So, unless you happen by a lucky accident to run upon it yourself, it is a problem. Most readers would not write to the publisher for a book.

MR. PITKIN: That underscores a problem which is being faced by many a paperback publisher, if not by all of them, and that is that the period of sale has been so reduced by the multiplicity of titles that the question today is not whether the production costs can be shaved a tenth of a cent or a hundredth of a cent, but rather whether this or that feature of paperback operations can be modified—whether the paperback industry can exist for the next several years as we know it today in point of volume and range of titles.

MR. GUINZBURG: And, of course, if you reduce your multiplicity of titles, then you have aggravated the very situation that we are worrying about.

Mr. PITKIN: Exactly.

MR. GUINZBURG: But I would like to comment on the other point you raised. I am glad it came up, because I think that there has been an enormous amount of exaggeration of the benefit to the reader, as indeed there has been of the benefit to the author. For offhand, it looks as though the existence of the paperback was sheer gain both to author and to reader.

I think that is not at all the case. In the first place, a great deal of paperback publishing is in fact a substitute for the pulp magazine, which has gone down sharply as the paperback has risen. A great deal of the material available in the paperbacks is the same sort of stuff in a different format. The rental library has almost disappeared since the paperback came into existence, which is a loss of distribution to the author and a loss also to readers. Material from the rental library used to be available on a far greater scale than now. But there is also something called the free public library, a place where people could go to get books if they wanted them, offering a far greater choice with none of the disadvantages, or with not as great disadvantage, let us say, of unavailability of title.

People, as we know, habitually borrow books from each other, which is also an inexpensive way of getting books. Finally, from the point of view of the reader, if there is some gain—as I am perfectly willing to concede—it may be offset by the fact that the hard-cover publisher has to charge the reader a good deal more for all the books that don't go into reprint, all that he doesn't think will go into reprint. If he has to break even somehow just on his own original sale through traditional channels, he may have to charge the customer a couple of dollars extra for a book in order to hope to come out ahead, which is certainly at least an offset to the benefit that the reader may get from inexpensive books.

Mr. Asheim: Here's another aspect of this problem. It seems to me you hinted at it in a sense. One of the things that many of us believe is that the paperback has created a whole new group of readers—that we have reached many people who did not read before. But it would seem at least possible to me that what we have created is perhaps a whole new group of people who are buying books that don't cost very much; that these are people who were reading anyway; that they got them from the library and in other ways, and if they didn't read them as books, they read them as pulp magazines.

And now these same readers happen to be buying these things which we call books and would seem to represent a whole new audience of book buyers, but they do not necessarily represent a great increase in readers as such.

MRS. VAN DOREN: Do you think it possible that during the war, when we had overseas editions in paper which were distributed to the troops all over the world by the millions, a great many men who had possibly never read anything except maybe a comic book or pulp magazine began to read books? Then after they had come home, when they wanted to read a book—having read nothing but paperbacks before and having no money to spend on hard-

bound books—they may have gone out and found paperbacks again.

Mr. Hersey: From the figures we have been given tonight, it seems as if they are losing the hang of it.

MR. GUINZBURG: One of the discouraging things, I think, is that we have practically no evidence that these big distributions do make readers for hard-bound editions of books in general or particular authors.

I think you can check that far more accurately in a case of book club distribution. Take the experience that I think all hardbound publishers have had: an author who has had an average sale of about 10,000 copies per book; and a major book club is suddenly interested in one of his books and distributes a couple of hundred thousand copies. Then the next book isn't a book club selection, and the author is probably right back where he was before. In other words, those couple of hundred thousand people who may have enjoyed the book that they received from the book club do not take note of the author's next book, do not build up substantial additional sales. I say this unhappily, of course, because one of the hopes that everybody in this business had was that the new methods of distribution would spread reading and form reading habits; and all books would benefit from this. But I have seen in just about thirty years no evidence that this happened.

Mr. PITKIN: Isn't it partly a question of who goes to bookstores? After all, when a book club puts out 200,000 copies of the work of any particular author, those books are not distributed with regard to the incidence of bookstores; they would simply go out all over the place, into little cities and rural areas where you have to go fifty miles, sometimes a hundred, to find a bookstore.

Mr. Asheim: Isn't it true that bookstore sales increase when a book is distributed through the clubs?

MR. PITKIN: That is a different question and has to do in part with the heavy promotion given to the book by the book club and the additional attention that the book receives when it is selected by a club. That

is a pretty well-known phenomenon.

MR. ASHEIM: The point I was making is that there are people who go into bookstores and buy a book club selection, while there is no apparent carry-over to the author's next book.

Mr. Guinzburg: What happens, I think, when the book is taken by the club is that there is then a lot of talk about that book, and some people actually find their way into a bookstore and buy it.

Mrs. Van Doren: Gentlemen, I think we must stop this discussion, and I should like in winding it up to ask you each one thing.

It seems to have developed in one way or another from what you have said here this evening that the American people are losing their interest in reading books. Do you think that is so, and if you think it is so, do you think it has any connection with the advent of paperbacks? Let me ask you first, Mr. Pitkin.

MR. PITKIN: I think it is possibly so—that we have to assume that it is so—and that it has nothing to do with the advent of paperbacks, but is associated with phenomena such as the tremendous growth of television and other factors in our culture which affect reading, and particularly the reading of books. And these have to do with the area that I mentioned earlier of anti-intellectualism—let us say with the loneliness of the man who is caught reading a good book.

Mrs. Van Doren: What do you think, Mr. Asheim?

MR. ASHEIM: I would certainly think that there is no reason to believe that the paper-backed book would cause a decrease in reading books. While I, as you know, have not gone along with the more extravagant claims about the wider audience that is created by the paper-bound book, there is no loubt that it has not reduced the audience, and it certainly has attracted some people who might not otherwise have been reached.

That today there is less interest in readng and that paperbacks abound at the same ime is a correlation, but there is no causal factor there at all that can be shown.

Mrs. Van Doren: But you do think there is less interest in reading?

MR. ASHEIM: I would fear that is so.

Mrs. Van Doren: Mr. Guinzburg, how about you?

Mr. Guinzburg: I would agree with Mr. Asheim that the paperback isn't in any sense a cause of any decline. I think the paperback is an expression in the book field of what is happening generally in turning the arts of communication into a mass medium rather than a rather relatively selected medium. Serious reading has relatively declined in terms of what we should have expected from the increasingly educated American public. It seems to me that this is all part of a very broad pattern in which there are common factors to be found in the newspaper world, in the magazine world, movies, radio and television that we are just part of that large pattern.

MRS. VAN DOREN: And you, Mr. Burger? MR. BURGER: I think that the reading of books has increased tremendously. I think it is largely attributable to the widespread distribution of soft-cover editions of books.

Mrs. Van Doren: You are optimistic on both scores?

Mr. Burger: Yes, I am, and I regret that the Gallup figures have declined from 1947 to 1953 from 22 to 17 per cent. I think 17 per cent for America in 1954 is a very good figure and quite respectable. And I think that with books printed in the millions—be they partly pulp, partly magazine writing reoriented into a new format, be they serious works of fiction or not—a great many more people are reading books now than they were on any long-term scale going back fifteen, twenty, thirty, forty years ago—a higher proportion of people.

Mrs. Van Doren: Mr. Hersey what do you feel about this?

Mr. Hersey: Television.

Mrs. Van Doren: Not so many are reading?

Mr. Hersey: I think not.

Mrs. Van Doren: And it's not paper-backs, but television?

MR. HERSEY: I think it's harder to teach

reading now. Children see images, not words, and I think there is less reading, less buying of books for that reason. I don't think paperbacks have anything to do with the decline.

Mr. Pitkin: I would just like to break in at this point if I might. You asked earlier, Mrs. Van Doren, what was thought about the man who was in service and was introduced to books in paper format, and whether he didn't come out of the Army or the Navy, whatever service, a book reader, having gone in with no background in this field at all. I think that that happened to a great many people who were in service. However, the age of that group of people must be considered: by this time they have taken on families and business, and have such financial responsibilities that they have become, let us say, less important in the book market, and are buying fewer books than they did five years ago.

This is something which apparently happens to people whether they are educated or not. As they take on more and more r sponsibilities, they read less and less. The may read more selectively and they may read better books, but in the aggregate, a far as I can make out, their total readir tends to decline as they take on family r sponsibilities.

So, if you take this along with the adver of television and the other factors that hav been discussed, I think you might hav something that would go far to explai some of the tendencies that have bee pointed to here.

Mrs. Van Doren: Who wants the la word?

Mr. Asheim: If all these factors militate against reading, it seems to me that Mr. Burger might properly have asked how much less reading there might have been if the paperbacks weren't around.

Mr. PITKIN: A fair question.

Mrs. Van Doren: Âny other comments Well, thank you all very much; we will look forward to seeing this in type.

### ......... Under Whatever Sky ......

#### IRWIN EDMAN

#### Take a Number

Everybody loves anniversaries, and the ore grandiose the number of years celerated, the better. Only the other day, it ems, Paris was having a festival to mark s somehow-determined two-thousandth aniversary. A little before that, Hitler was elebrating the first year of an empire that as to last a thousand.

People settle for smaller units of time occasions for jubilation and ceremony. In native city, New York, has just been tarking its three-hundredth anniversary as n incorporated city. My native university, solumbia, is embarking on a year-long observation of its bicentennial.

The anniversaries that have perhaps the nost wistful appeal are those of instituions, modest in point of years, which celerate the fact that they have survived at all nd publish to the world the tremulously onfident hope that they will continue to o so, for a while yet anyway. There is the ittle review that has a grand festival numer marking its fifth or possibly its first nniversary. There is the little theater roup, barely at the close of its initial year, hat inaugurates a celebration season. There the struggling young college, built by local ride, that at the end of five years dresses p the occasion no less ardently than if its ontinuity went back to Plato's Academy r Aristotle's Lyceum—as perhaps it might e argued it does. The precariously financed eview, the struggling theater group, the scally uncertain college, by thus celebratng are at once saying, "See how far we lave come in how short a time," and 'Don't look now, but we are surviving," or erhaps, in an undertone, "-if you will ill help us."

All celebrants are either one wit Pilgrim Fathers at the end of thei arduous year, or one with Queen Vic contented subjects at her Jubilee le back on fifty years of comfortable grai looking forward—how probable it seemed—to a thousand more.

But celebrations have a deeper resc when the institution thus blazoned has sustenance of a long memory deeply rooted tradition. "Freshmen a allowed to sit here," is supposed to been inscribed on a certain bench certain quite new state university underneath, "Beginning next year th be a tradition." It is nice to have ground to look back to instead of to for. How convenient it would be human race could make up its min when it began, just when, beyond the adventure of a doubt, mankind could regarded itself as in the first year of h ity. Two hundred thousand years period sometimes agreed upon. Perh the midst even of a cold war, huma a whole could be roused to celebra two-hundred-thousandth anniversary human race, a festival for all mank world-wide exposition of the best tha has accomplished and, even now, a for his survival and a faith that the fire hundred thousand years are the hard

#### Quest for Uncertainty

A pessimist these days may be cy defined as one who believes the fu settled, or even that there will be one Dewey once wrote a book entitle Quest for Certainty, in which he that the history of philosophy was small part the mistaken quest for a lute. But the history of contem

thought could well be written as the search for the conditional, the tentative, an escape clause, a way out. Today it is not uncertainty we fear so much as inevitability. Anxiety about insecurity? Not, in the slang current at the turn of century, on your tintype.

Concern now is over the unalterably fated, the ominously in-the-cards. If we have escaped Marxism with its dreary theory of dialectical inevitability in the unfolding of history, we find ourselves under the whip of some metaphysical Unconditioned. Or worse than any Absolute, we find among the Existentialists the inescapable Absurd.

Even without benefit of high metaphysical speculation, we are burdened with doctrines or, if not doctrines, the moods of inevitability. The next war is unavoidable, or destruction through the hydrogen bomb. The fate is fixed by our chromosomes or by our now damning childhood. Our very views are fixed by the pattern of the culture in which we live. In America, the reputed land of freedom, we are fated, we now learn, to be lonely in a crowd. By 1984, we shall all be pulled and pushed about by the automatism of the monolithic state.

The Quest for Certainty? A little margin of error, a daring slight possibility that it is all a mistake, a glimmer of suggestion that we may start over, that "it ain't necessarily so," a fresh breeze of contingency, and how much better we shall all be feeling!

#### Hi-Fi

A new phrase has come into the language and has already become, for affection and convenience, shortened. High-fidelity, we are assured, has become a mass mania, and the phrase hi-fi is epidemic in conversation and in the newspapers. The country is filled with amateurs seeking the best components for hi-fi systems—the best audio, the best magnet, the best speaker, and the best God knows what, which the non-addict can neither pronounce nor understand.

Part of the interest in high-fidelity phonograph reproduction is the familiar Ameri-

can interest in gadgets. But part of it is something deeper. It is the apparently growing passion for genuine fidelity in musical reproduction, the desire to hear music over one's own speaker in one's own living room as nearly as possible as one hears it in the concert hall—the oboe with its edged sweetness (that ill wind which nobody blows good), the broad sweep of the lower notes on the cello, the massed attack of strings, and, through the miracle of the coaxial speaker, the sense of the whole air being filled with music, of our whole consciousness being surrounded by it.

Occasionally an acoustical expert reminds the devotee that beyond a certain point fidelity becomes so high that the ordinary ear of the ordinary listener cannot really perceive all the fidelity there is. But the passion remains unchecked. For the desire is not, one suspects, for something simply acoustically faithful. It is one instance of a more generalized and touching concern, for fidelity überhaupt, for, as the phrase now runs, "over-all" authenticity. Hi-fi is another name for the quest for certainty, for the search for the absolute, for the pursuit of truth. Perhaps in thinking, it is as with the human ear; beyond a certain range, truth too would be, in every sense, beyond the human ken. But the hunger persists and is content somehow to be nourished by illusion. Many a philosophy has had the sheen and clarity of hi-fi; it has sounded as if it were the voice of truth. This, it has seemed to say, is Reality speaking. And the world, or a certain proportion of it, for a certain length of time has listened as intently as if it were really overhearing, thanks to the most expert gadgeteers using the most modern components, the subtlest overtones of the Absolute.

#### Easy Does It

In writing to foreigners, one is torn between bewailing the hysterical climate of political opinion in this country and assuring them that they must not take it quite so seriously. One reminds them that there have been Know-Nothing movements before this in American history, and that many things, and not only in America, are

said in political maneuvering that are not meant to be taken at their face value or ever actually put into practice, promises never intended to be kept. One reminds foreigners that there is too much humorous good sense in the American people for them ever to be completely or long taken in by a demagogue, too much independence to be subservient to a dictator.

Yet in one's heart one is uneasy. The fund of humorous good sense does not last forever, and a country which has a sense of fun has not been without its fanaticisms: and conformity is growing among us. Perhaps, to borrow the title of S. N. Behrman's play of twenty years ago, this is "no time for comedy," or for casual playfulness, or for simple or amused disdain. John Dewey, in one of his few aphorisms, said, "While the saint sits in his Ivory Tower, the burly sinners rule the world." Well, while the humorist smiles at the spectacle, the spectacle itself may become less and less something to smile at.

One tries another gambit. Perhaps it is a time to be serious, but not to be solemn. All is lost if one becomes as rigid as the fanatics whom one deplores and detests. Casualness does not befit a world-wide crisis. But a tense solemnity has never by itself solved a problem. Easy doesn't quite do it, but it helps. There is nothing the demagogue wants more than for us to take him with literalness. How devastating it would be to any fanaticism if the mere mention of it should evoke universal laughter.

#### The New Villainy

The Veterans of Foreign Wars in the sovereign state of New Jersey, it was recently announced in the papers, had discovered that schoolchildren were being taught a pledge to grow up to be citizens of the world. A very respectable character named Cleanthes wrote a hymn long ago to the City of Zeus. The Stoic philosophers in general dreamed of a world community and thought, like Paul, that all men were members one of another. Some of the wisest and most generous of all mankind have dreamed of a time when the human race should be one. So unsubversive a character

as Tennyson spoke, in "Locksley Hall," of the vision of "the parliament of man, the federation of the world." It entered nobody's head that he was undermining the Parliament of Britain or sapping the supports of the British Empire.

But times clearly and sadly have changed. A small child displaying an innocent ambition to grow up to be a citizen of the world is now suspect of political original sin or of being, at the very least, the victim of dark and sinister forces seeking to overthrow the American state. How silly, one is tempted to ask, can one get? Frankly, though, one hesitates in this era to put any conceivable limits to absurdity. It is not, perhaps, impossible to go further still than to declare something subversive about the idea of world citizenship. It is not incredible that the Veterans of Foreign Wars may go further still. For clearly, foreigners are the cause of wars. Without foreigners there would be no wars. And what is clearly wrong with foreigners is that they are foreign, and thus not clearly human; or perhaps they are merely human, not, like ourselves, something special and extra-human. "I pledge myself," one may be hearing children taught to say, "to resign from the human race, which except in the forty-eight states is only by diplomatic courtesy entitled to be called human." "I pledge myself," one may be hearing a little while from now, now that space ships are in the offing, "to resign from the solar system." Or eventually even, "I pledge myself not to recognize that there are other planets, or even other countries. I pledge myself to the only land in which people exist, my own, my native land."

#### The Age of Labels

Our age has been called the age of this and the age of that. Just the other year, W. H. Auden was calling it "the Age of Anxiety." Just the other week, James A. Wechsler, in his admirable political and spiritual autobiography, called it "the Age of Suspicion." And no one is likely to quarrel with either of the terms; nearly everybody is anxious and nearly everyone else is suspicious. If one is to settle for a brace of epithets for our time, either of these currently epidemic words will do.

One would give something to know what a judicious or imaginative historian of, say, a hundred years from now will call the current segment of history. "The Age of Self-Consciousness" might do. Surely there can have been no age that was so universally talked about or in which individuals talked so self-absorbedly about the nature of their own natures. But perhaps "the Age of Labeling" would do best of all. This is the period, the historian will observe, when everybody described everyone else as an introvert, when every neurotic recognized neurosis in his friends, when everyone thought everyone else was a latent "this" or a suppressed "that," when the intellectuals were dubbed eggheads by the middlebrows who were thus dubbed by the intellectuals, when everything to the left of Louis XVI was called communist by fascists, and where everything right of socialism was identified by others as fascist. This is the period, the historian will note, in which the simplest social facts had to be dressed up in the fanciest labels; society itself became a fancydress ball of categories.

#### Fiction Is Stranger Than Truth

The winter has been enlivened with at least two major hoaxes, one literary and one anthropological. The enkindling account of the fortitude of a Canadian who was in secret intelligence work in France during the Occupation turned out to be a

tall tale invented to edify church groups and to serve as a lesson in courage fortified by faith. The Piltdown man turned out too, such of him as was not faked, to have been fifty thousand years old instead of five hundred thousand. Some unknown practical joker, if he were still alive, would have the laugh on the learned world, just as a few years ago the Dutch forger who had fooled the experts and had made everybody believe in his own homemade Vermeers laughed bitterly at his dupes who caught up with him.

These hoaxes in literature, in art, in science have a long history; and the motive for perpetrating them is sometimes the desire for gain or celebrity or amusement or revenge. There is a wry satisfaction in reading about the exposé of one of these frauds, and the sometimes smug conviction that one had suspected it all along. But there is a curious ambiguity, come to think of it, about the idea of fraud in literature. The Canadian invention about spy experiences in France turned out to be a fiction. But fiction is fiction, too, only for the time being it is a highly successful hoax. Coleridge grandly says that poetry requires a poetic suspension of disbelief. But the engrossing poet and the convincing novelist induce not a cessation of doubt, but the assent of all the feeling tone of belief. What else is all art but the creation of a world that is for the time being quite as credible, perhaps more so, than the world of diurnal

## ..... The Revolving Bookstand .....

#### The Eye and the Mind

THE VOICES OF SILENCE: Man and His Art. By André Malraux. New York: Doubleday and Company. 661 pp. \$25.00.

#### Reviewed by Morris Weitz

This is one of the great books on the history and philosophy of the arts. Concerned as it is with the plastic arts, it succeeds in destroying many vast clichés about both historical understanding of art and its place in the domain of Man. As history, it dismisses the orthodox classification of Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Chinese, Medieval, Renaissance, et cetera, up to Modern; and it substitutes for this a new, brilliantly conceived set of categories: "Museum With-Walls," "The Metamorphoses of Apollo," "The Creative Process," and "The Aftermath of the Absolute," with which Malraux illumines all the great periods of art, individual artists, even particular works, as well as some haunting metaphysical problems in the nature of creation.

The photograph and its attendant art of reproduction have helped to institute a new kind of museum, the first real anthology of the arts. They have forced the formulating of a new conception of the development of the arts. From the first to the last page, Malraux retells the story of this development: an adventure through his museum without walls, where incisive, impassioned text is juxtaposed to equally revealing photographs. Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Buddhist, Chinese, Medieval, Italian, French, Northern, Modern, Savage, Insane, Children's, and Folk art are all treated with unorthodox brilliance. One example, I think, will suffice to illustrate his technique of treatment. On page 325,

there is a detail from Michelangelo's "The Last Judgment," about which Malraux writes:

In the Florentine "Christs" that Michelangelo had carved before this, there had not been a hint of that strange colossal figure whose maledictory gesture consigns to the outer darkness those wretched sinners wrested from the brief darkness of the tomb. When in one of his last works . . . Fra Angelico had portrayed that gesture, it was still charged with benediction and seemed to be directed towards the attendant angels. Its transformation is one of the most significant transformations in the whole history of art. . . . [Michelangelo's] all-conquering Messiah was not born in a stable, was never mocked and buffeted, succored no travelers on the Way to Emmaus, nor was He crucified between two thieves. Remote indeed is that divine humility which He shared with the saints who now escort Him, like a terrified bodyguardi

In literally hundreds of analyses of this sort, Malraux turns the full force of his basic categories onto the work of art itself in order to effect an illumination for the "spectator" of his museum without walls. Indeed, however much one may disagree with his major metaphysical points about art, there can be no doubt that what he says about yast amounts of individual works of art adds up to the most cogently aesthetic criticism we have yet been given in a history of art. These concrete aesthetic essays on particular works of art alone make this whole book worth living with for a long, long time.

But, in my opinion, what is supremely important and what prompted the high regard for it when it first appeared as the three-volume *Psychology of Art* (of which the *Voices* is a slightly revised version) are the philosophical things Malraux says about the arts. Art, he says, is no imita-

MORRIS WEITZ, associate professor of philosophy at Vassar College, is the author of *Philosophy of the Arts* and a number of articles on the arts. He is presently engaged on a work in the philosophy of criticism.



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tion of nature, but a transformation of it, in which the artist creates his own world. In his third section on "The Creative Process," Malraux argues that the truly great artist has always started his creative life work not from any study of nature but from other art. From imitation of other art, the young genius goes on to the pastiche and eventually revolts against all that has gone before him. Cézanne, Malraux writes, did not return to his beloved mountain to realize it better but to realize his picture better. Every genius in our tradition, he says, fulfilled himself only through this initial destruction of other art. It is his psychological crucible in which he forges his own style. And it is style, Malraux claims, which is of the essence of great art.

Art, Malraux says, is the revolt against man's fate, an age-long dialogue with destiny. Each of the great styles and movements in the history of art has conceived this revolt differently, and the diverse conceptions constitute the great styles. It is here that we must begin in our imaginary museum, and not with "masterpieces." "Every true style is the scaling-down to our human perspective of that eternal flux on whose mysterious rhythms we are borne ineluctably, in a never-ceasing drift of stars." It is the artist, but especially the genius, who meets our human destiny head-on and challenges it by creating his own universe of which he is the master. The Greek, the Byzantine, the Buddhist, the Romanesque, et cetera, up to the Modern artists have all succeeded in their revolt against destiny and other artists' revolts only by creating a different style, a "new transformation of the meaning of the world." Style is an interpretation, through the plastic materials of the artist, of the reality within the world of appearances, whether it be the Eternity of the Byzantine, the Serenity of the Chinese, or the Drama of Christianity personalized in Christ. Style, genius and nature meet when the artist in revolt conceives a new art which does not yet exist and goes to nature for suggestions of forms. (As Maritain has put it in his new book on art, the artist steals from, he doesn't copy nature.)

### Balance Sheet for a Good Year — 1953

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Malraux's emphasis upon the importance of art as against experience or nature in the creative process, his insight into style as a precise conception of the universe, his notion of a masterpiece as the most personal expression of a style, and his nonrhapsodical analysis of the nature of artistic genius all strike me as first-rate philosophical contributions. In a tradition in which these concepts of style, genius, creation and destiny have been given wholly unintelligible treatment by writers of one sort or another, it is an intellectual joy to watch Malraux pin down these concepts to concrete examples in the arts themselves. And with what French devastation he exposes the lingering clichés about understanding art: e.g., that we must read the autobiographies and writings of artists, or that we must bring sociological science to bear on art. We need bring nothing to our new museum, Malraux insists, except an eye with which to see and a mind with which to understand what is in the work of art itself, for this is where the artist has come alive.

A Bleak and Powerful Bestiary
THE MARMOT DRIVE. By John Hersey.
New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 273 pp. \$3.50.

### Reviewed by HIRAM HAYDN

This potent allegory relates the story of a two-day drive by the inhabitants of Tunxis, Connecticut, to exterminate the marmots, or woodchucks, of the vicinity, who have grown so bold as to walk right down a town sidewalk, and so numerous as to seem to some of the villagers to threaten their ownership of Tunxis.

From the very beginning of the drive, there is apparent a pervasive ambiguity as to the relative degree of animality in hunted and hunter. Anak Welch, a prominent townsman, says, "What we forget is that we are still part of the woodlot where it grows rank and wild." A visiting young woman from New York named

Hester wonders if the Selectman, leader of the drive, half saint and half sardonic cynic, "saw evil in the beasts but not in himself—or the other way round. . . ." There is a moment in the drive when Eben, the Selectman's son, and a marmot confront each other: "Both figures were ambiguously posed—either menacing or craven, it was hard to see which; or both were both at once, maybe. . . ." Hester associates the sunbathing of a marmot, which she observes, with the undertow in herself that makes her never so content as when lying on a beach under the sun, drained of all thought and of all feeling except the sensation of the immediate physical situation. And there are countless other incidents or exchanges that make it evident that Mr. Hersey's title refers to more than the literal pursuit of the four-legged animals.

Whatever the other villagers think of the purpose of the marmot drive, the Selectman is clearly bent upon exorcising the compulsive animal drives within human beings. "The only specific for evil-poisonhe remarks in another context, "is evil." It is ironic indeed that it is only at the very end of the book—when the drive ends in a climax of sadism, brutality and general disintegration—that he seems fully to realize in actuality what he has stated several times theoretically. Early in the drive he has been sure that they have flushed as many as four hundred woodchucks; and the final yield is very small. What, he wonders during a moment of reflection, can have become of all those others? A "wild surmise" that the author never develops explicitly flickers across his and the reader's mind.

Whatever may be the specific political applications of what Mr. Hersey is saying in his fable, this is as savagely pessimistic a reckoning of what has become of the American heritage of liberty, good will and human aspiration as has been written in our time. The past of Tunxis possesses dignity; this is evident in the reminiscences of its oldest citizen, in the early memories of the Selectman, in the town's historic landmarks. The epitaph of the Selectman's father was, "His head was in the clouds;

<sup>•</sup> HIRAM HAYDN is the editor of The American Scholar.

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his feet were on the ground." In the Selectman himself both these attitudes are apparent, but a split, a schism, has taken place so that it seems he can exercise only one at a time. His idealism lacks any solid basis in reality (he is defining his own nature, although speaking of "Yankees" in general, when he refers to "an idealist even after he has come to see how hopeless life is"). His realism, bereft of true purpose and vision, has become a grim and sardonic naturalism: he reminds his truly idealistic son, who is citing the Commandments to him, of all the less savory parts of the Bible that he can remember.

Yet, despite this duality, this fatal rift in his personality, the Selectman towers above his neighbors. Indeed, not since Shake-speare's *Troilus and Cressida* has there been a collection of characters who are so consistently described in terms of animals and animal characteristics. They speak a rough, crabbed language halfway between exaggerated Yankee talk and the grunts and sighs and snorts of beasts.

If these people do indeed represent Mr. Hersey's sad view of human nature—and in particular of human nature today in the United States—what is the explanation? Surely in part we must return to the words of Anak Welch about "the woodlot where it grows rank and wild." The Selectman's father did not, to be sure, reject the animal heritage of the human condition, but he harnessed it to those values which have most traditionally been what we mean when we refer proudly to being human. Our defection, Mr. Hersey seems to be saying, has been twofold: to forget these values and to forget the dangers in our animal heritage. Hence we have come to live (or at least the citizens of Tunxis have) in a little jungle of fear and hate and lust.

To hate, these characters demonstrate again and again, is almost surely to become that which one hates. To fear is to come close to insuring the eventuality of what one fears. And to experience evil or guilt within oneself usually engenders a screaming necessity to discover, pursue, persecute it outside oneself. Only love can lift one above those compulsive animal drives of fear and

hatred and sloth and lust that make the grotesques of the marmot drive jiggle through their dance of living death. And the House of Love, as the Selectman explains, is simply abandoned: what has happened to people, he points out painfully, is "a part of the breakdown of ordinary everyday love that we see all around us." It is significant that the only intensively presented symbol of love in the book is found by one of the few characters still groping toward decency and sensitiveness and generosity-found where? Within the body of death-the skeleton of a marmot. The little parable of Auntie Dorcas, on the other hand, illustrates the whole cycle of fear and hate and redeeming love.

Bereft of those attributes we most happily think of as human, unable to bear what they sense inside themselves, the people of Tunxis speak truth about themselves unwittingly whenever they claim to be describing someone or something else. Let one of them call another stubborn, for example, and you can be fairly sure that you have a just estimate of the speaker. And indeed, possessing no principles believed in and lived, they all resort to dogmatism of one kind or another; whatever they proclaim as conviction is likely to be the opposite of the truth within them. Only young Eben has in any degree that "humble flexibility" and decent uncertainty that make "lonely courage" possible-and he is sorely tried by the events of these two nightmarish days.

Mr. Hersey's bleak and powerful bestiary has met with a strange reception. To be sure, it is much too packed (every anecdote, every incident, every reference holds or may hold symbolic or thematic content) for casual digestion. Yet, the confession on the part of most of the book's reviewers of complete failure to comprehend its substance, is difficult to understand. One would like to find the downright abuse of a small number of other reviewers equally difficult to understand. The affirmative idealist of The Wall has become the disillusioned idealist of The Marmot Drive—surely no reason for a genuinely disinterested reviewer to advocate corporal punishment DOUBLEDAY PRESENTS...

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for the author, as has at least one. Perhaps indeed that review and any others like it are melancholy but solid evidence of at least the partial validity of Mr. Hersey's painful theme. Perhaps it would be salutary for such to try again to understand the cause of the Selectman's "awful sting of recognition" at the end of the book, to try again to fathom his "awful, incipient comprehension."

The Marmot Drive is a deeply somber book—but no more so than Gulliver's Travels. It is difficult, demanding of the reader—but not much more so than some famous allegories of the past, had one not so many scholars and interpreters to help one with them. And it is this reviewer's profound conviction that The Marmot Drive is one of the few books of this decade with which we must reckon long after the end of the decade.

# The Creative Person and the Creative Process

THE LIFE AND WORK OF SIGMUND FREUD. Volume I: The Formative Years and the Great Discoveries, 1856-1900. By Ernest Jones, M.D. Illustrated. New York: Basic Books, Inc. 488 pp. \$6.75.

#### Reviewed by Norman Kelman, M.D.

Whatever the verdict of the years to come and the increasing work being done in the art and science of psychoanalysis regarding Freudian theory, Sigmund Freud will stand as a pioneer. This alone warrants him a place among those who have expressed the finest potential of Man.

Born three years before the publication of Charles Darwin's Origin of Species, Freud in his lifetime charted a course which has led us to the study of Man's most distinctive characteristic—mind and soul. Others—philosophers, psychologists, physicians, saints—preceded him in their recog-

nition of dimensions of humanness beyond the obvious. But Freud was the first to attempt a systematic investigation and explanatory theory of Man's psyche, and to develop a therapeutic method based on these findings. His genius was not that he built a bridge between one scientific discipline and another. His was a courageous and intellectually keen thrust deep into himself and into the Unknown.

Students of psychoanalysis and of other fields of study in human relations can be grateful to Ernest Jones for his scholarly presentation of the first forty-four years of Freud's eighty-three years of life. In this first volume of what will be a three-volume work, we have material which is at once illuminating for an understanding of Freud's theories and also a call for humility before the creative person and the creative process.

But it is wryly paradoxical that Freud, who opened the doors to life for so many, should himself fare so badly in one sense at the hands of his biographer. André Maurois has said that the writing of biography is a fusion of fact, wisdom and art, and that "the aim of the biographer is to make the man and his time come alive again." Unfortunately, Dr. Jones must rank here as a recorder of facts, although his record is a full, rich, scholarly one. Only occasionally does Freud himself come alive, and then only when he speaks in his own words through his letters. The immediate medical atmosphere and the state of psychiatric and neurological knowledge of the times come through more vividly. And this in itself is of great value to the student who too often feels, despite the record, that psychiatry and medicine begin and end with his own era. We get some feeling for the immensity of the ignorance which suffused the therapy of the mentally ill. We see some picture of the impact of politics and professional jealousy on medical science and art. And Dr. Jones presents us with a thorough development of Freud's thinking as he progressed from anatomist and microscopist, through his researches in neurology, into therapy of hysteria and the other neurotic syndromes. This is further

O Norman Kelman, training analyst and lecturer of the American Institute for Psychoanalysis and lecturer of the New School for Social Research, is the author of numerous articles in the field of psychoanalysis and child development.

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enriched by ample reference, careful footnoting and a detailed bibliography.

There are perhaps many reasons for Freud's not emerging clearly as the person he was; and, to be sure, this is not due to his being a specter. This lack of aliveness is missed especially in a biography of such a person because so much of his original work stemmed from his own self-analysis as well as from his clinical activities.

Some of these reasons may be due to one of the motives in Jones's desire to write his work, namely, "that ill-natured people were already at work distorting isolated passages [of Freud's autobiography] with the object of disparaging his character, and this could be rectified only by a still fuller exposition of his inner and outer life." Apparently, the need to combat a supposed growing personal attack on Freud made necessary a spirit of historical accuracy, almost a legal briefing, rather than an artistic fusing of the data and spirit of Freud. But it would have been better for Freud to "come alive" to stand for himself. Out of this would come the richness to amplify his work; and his personal detractors, if that they be, would in the process be disavowed. But in this, Jones has failed.

Another factor which probably contributes to the flatness of this book, and for this we have to hold Dr. Jones responsible, is the misguided notion that despair is a human frailty from which Freud did not suffer. In several places the comment is made that Freud was "never in despair." But in his letters, especially to Fliess, Freud says in his own words that he was often in despair. Moreover, this is one of the aspects of Freud's greatness—that he could despair, that he not merely indulged in self-pity but truly felt his loneliness and his suffering. This is part of the creative process. As Claude Bernard has said, "Those who do not know the torment of the unknown cannot have the joy of discovery." Freud knew both, and Dr. Jones does not do him justice when he minimizes that struggle.

At another point his biographer says that Freud was never attracted by the apparently unknowable, and seems to feel

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this laudable. But it was precisely because Freud was so attracted that he succeeded in enlarging the area of the known and gave us the tools to reduce the area of the "unknowable."

If these comments about Dr. Jones as a biographer lessen the eagerness of potential readers of this book, it would be a loss for them. For there is, in the wealth of documentation, especially through the correspondence between Freud and Martha Bernays in the four years of their courtship, and in the remnants of the Fliess correspondence, wonderful material for the creative reader himself to breathe life into Freud. Incidentally, in this latter correspondence (which Freud probably would have wished erased), there is a chapter suggesting a truly creative relationship of a disciplined man (Freud) and a fabulously imaginative man (Fliess). It is most likely that this relationship was crucial in encouraging Freud to move ahead more imaginatively and intensively with his hard-won clinical observations and to his own selfanalysis.

It is in Freud's words that one finds his aliveness: he was a lonely man, a Jew and an alien in the Vienna that was for him more anti-Semitic than gay. He was a proud and poor man-beholden to friends who helped him financially, yet unable in this period to maintain for long a deep relationship. He was a stranger to himself, yet not a stranger to deep hates and angers which flared up against former friends. He was capable of intense passion and warm tenderness. His letters to Martha Bernays, of love, of his embracing the beauty of Italy and his other travels, are a tribute to this. He was a man of great integrity and courage, as his tenacity in the face not only of hostile professional criticism, but of his own inner doubts, demonstrates. When he discovered that his crediting of patients' reports of infantile sexual attacks had led him to a false theory, he was shaken—yes, in despair. But then he could boldly thrust further to the significant recognition of fantasies in neurosis.

He was not without humor, and once, when his friend Fliess "accused" him of

being left-handed, Freud jocularly that "so far as he could remembe childhood he had two left hands, one on the right side had always th ence."

Freud was an ambitious man, no terial things, but for knowledge instruments to acquire it. In the he expected and feared an earl which gave impetus to his tremence ductivity. And the very expansiv his ambitions added to his fear life would be cut short. In his ow as written to Fliess, is an import to his genius: "You often estimate highly. For I am not really a man o not an observer, not an experimer not a thinker. I am nothing but by ment a conquistador—an advenyou want to translate the wordcuriosity, the boldness, and the tena belongs to that type of being. . . was all this, including that which he was not. Little wonder then at iety, his possessiveness, his pride despair. But we today must be that in this variety and turmoil wa structiveness which made for growt than stagnation.

This is some of Freud, and there more to be gained for the image reader. One could wish Jones had a ter for us in this respect. For in I have such an opportunity, in his a writings, his correspondence, in that many of his contemporaries, in Dr. Jones, still live. It would be to motives genuinely intended for go hampered by a misguided notion need be defended against derogate the movement which his work felt it could not tolerate the "live"

Strange New World
THE JOURNALS OF LEWIS AND
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his The Course of Empire, which traced the long course of geographical discovery in the American West to its climax in 1805 when Lewis and Clark came down the Columbia to the Pacific. The journals of this expedition are indeed, as Mr. DeVoto says, "by far the most interesting as well as the most important original narrative of North American exploration." But they have been virtually inaccessible to the general reader. Although the urbane semi-official narrative of the expedition prepared by Nicholas Biddle was reprinted several times during the nineteenth century, the only previous edition of the original journals is that of Reuben Gold Thwaites, published in eight volumes in 1904-1905, and now out of print. Because Thwaites properly considered himself obliged to print every scrap of manuscript he had access to, his edition is a repository of historical source material rather than a coherent narrative.

Mr. DeVoto has skillfully put together a continuous account of the expedition, embodying the essential parts of the original journals but omitting more than half the total bulk of the surviving manuscript material-repetitious entries (where the two commanders kept parallel records for the same days), routine meteorological data, technical descriptions of plants and animals, and so on. He has added occasional passages from the journals of other members of the party, and by means of brief transitional and explanatory notes has made the sometimes cryptic documents fully accessible to the reader. He is especially helpful in working out the geography of a route traversing vast stretches of territory that no white man had ever seen before, where even the major rivers and mountain ranges appeared on no maps and bore only local Indian names. He has not only mastered the considerable scholarship on this subject, but he has been over the ground himself, and he knows what he is talking about. Further help with the geography is provided by six maps in the text and an endpaper map covering the entire area traversed by the party.

But the expedition involved much morethan geographical investigaton. In his brilliant forty-page introduction, the editor makes it clear that as these weary men hauled their dugouts up the rapids of mountain streams or bartered with remote Indian tribes for food and horses, they were the focus of a complex pattern of forces involving Europe as well as America. Their most obvious function was to further Thomas Jefferson's efforts to keep from British hands the enormous territory between the Mississippi and the Pacific that Napoleon could not hold for France. Almost as obviously, they were pioneers of American settlement of the Far West. At the same time, they were diplomatic agents of the federal government in its relations with hitherto unknown Indian tribes; they were instructed to find out what the Canadian fur companies were up to in the northern Rockies and beyond; and they were supposed to survey a route along which the China trade could pour its wealth into the United States.

The journals make vivid reading, however, entirely apart from their historical significance. The actual entries set down nightly by the campfire, with their impressionistic spelling, their mixture of blunt vernacular with occasional flights of rhetoric, the first-hand reporting of how it felt to be in an absolute wilderness with no food in sight beyond a handful of dried fish, have an immediacy that no contrivance of artistic technique could equal. What is recorded here is not only the strange new world of the Far West, but the ways of thinking and feeling and acting which the members of the party brought with themfrom Virginia, from Kentucky, from the French-Canadian settlements along the Mississippi. It is as interesting to learn that in their infrequent leisure hours the enlisted men played at prisoners' base or danced for the entertainment of the Mandans as it is to read about the dress and tribal mores of the Nez Percés. And it is also fascinating to observe the discipline

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of the wilderness bringing out the essential qualities of men-Drouillard's skill as a hunter and his quick mastery of the Indian sign language; the unbreakable solidarity of the party after two years of constant companionship; most of all, perhaps, the personal traits of the two captains, so different in temperament, yet equally endowed with the innate gift of command, especially in moments of emergency like the surprise attack of the Sioux upon Lewis and his detachment near Maria's River on the return journey. Mr. DeVoto has arranged his version to preserve this rich texture, and in consequence has produced a work of historical importance that has an almost irresistible appeal to the imagination.

#### Minutiae and Unrefined Ore

THE SECRET DIARY OF HAROLD L. ICKES: The First Thousand Days, 1933-1936. New York: Simon and Schuster. 738 pp. \$6.00.

### Reviewed by Asher Lans

The "Return to Normalcy" of the Republican party during the decade of Harding, Coolidge and Hoover never brought the complete internment of the GOP's liberal wing. With typical intransigence, a group of senators from the trans-Mississippi states, mostly survivors of the Bull Moose movement, broke party ranks in 1932 and supported Franklin D. Roosevelt in his first Presidential campaign. The victorious Roosevelt sought to develop a permanent alliance between the Democratic party and these dissentient Republicans by placing some of their leaders in the Cabinet. Declinations of office by Senators Hiram Johnson and Bronson Cutting resulted in the comparatively unknown Harold Ickes becoming Secretary of the Interior.

In 1933, Ickes was in his fifty-ninth year, a veteran of innumerable unsuccessful reform movements, an experienced opponent of the corrupt political machines of Illinois. On past performance he was destined for a

short tenure of office. Although remaining a maverick, Ickes unexpectedly became the only person other than Frances Perkins who was to serve in the Roosevelt Cabinet from its first to its last day. He expanded the functions of the Department of Interior, became Public Works Administrator, and, as sidelines, secured control of the administration's oil, coal, and housing programs.

Throughout his service in Washington, Ickes kept elaborate digests of his work and meetings, which he weekly converted into a diary. The present volume is an abbreviated version of this journal for the period, between FDR's inauguration on March 4, 1933, and the end of 1936. The publishers state that some portions of the original text have been altered or changed in context. The few editorial comments are unobtrusive and helpful.

The secretly kept diary maintains the reputation for outspokenness which gave its author the proud sobriquet of the "Old Curmudgeon." It gives frank and contemporaneous descriptions of Cabinet and White House meetings, and of political activities. The diary gives names, exact dates, detailed paraphrases of conversations.

X

One of the book's most revealing sections is its evocation of the atmosphere of 1933 and of the frightened demands of the business community for control from Washington. Ickes records the pleas of mining and petroleum barons for federal succor. His opening entries describe "Great and mighty men crawling to Washington on their hands and knees these days to get the government to run their business for them." FDR's public works, relief, and related programs, the author states, did not emerge from an integrated economic policy, but from the fact that "hunger is not debatable." In 1933, the alternative to Roosevelt was revolution. However, the closing pages of the diary's first volume record the stentorian insistence of the same industrialists in 1936 that the New Deal was "creeping socialism" and bringing "America to the very brink of national bankruptcy."

The Secretary of the Interior was a compulsive combatant. He engaged in perpetual guerrilla warfare with other Cabinet

ASHER LANS practices law in New York City. He was formerly a lecturer at Brooklyn College, Hunter College and the College of the City of New York.

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members, in battles for the control of the public works program and the allocation of agencies within the government. He was almost always embroiled with his own chief subordinates. However, by some trick of dissociation, Ickes' pugnacity did not truncate his interest in the character of his associates. The Secret Diary brings to life and partially restores to reputation such forgotten leaders as Garner, Dern, Cummings and Frank Walker. Still more instructive is the description of the role played by the White House secretariat and executive assistants in shaping policy by controlling access to the President. Like many others, Ickes found that the best avenue of disinterested approach to FDR was through the President's confidential secretary, Marguerite LeHand.

However, as a chronicle of official Washington under Roosevelt, The Secret Diary is on the whole a dull and uninformative record. Too much space is devoted to unrefined ore-the minutiae of Ickes' social activities and the details of local public works projects. The author is always preoccupied with his own statements and his own reactions. His principal comment on a meeting at which the devaluation of the dollar was decided is a statement of annovance at the garrulousness of the Cabinet member who sat on his left. The most serious defect stems from the very direct and essentially simple-minded nature of Ickes' approach to political and administrative problems. He seems totally unable to understand the motivations and the operational techniques of more complex personalities.

Consider, for example, the large portion of this book which describes the struggle between Hopkins and Ickes. From Ickes' standpoint the issue was simple. Roosevelt had differentiated between relief and construction projects; the former had been allotted to Hopkins, the latter to Ickes. Therefore, WPA should restrict itself to leaf-raking. In practice, the line of demarcation between relief and public works inevitably became a question of mere fiat. Ickes' construction projects were usually better planned; he was extraordinarily costconscious, and produced more for the money. However, his programs got under way with intolerable slowness, in large part because he insisted on retaining detailed control of all projects. Hopkins was more slipshod, but he understood how to delegate authority. He was capable of quickly creating employment for many men on relatively important work and under surprisingly efficient conditions.

From a superficial standpoint, Roose-velt's handling of the controversy seems in-explicable. He never squarely resolved the issue. He placated Ickes through flattery and by devisal of an infinite variety of compromises and co-ordination programs, all designed to give the Secretary of the Interior the appearance of being the sole Public Works Administrator and all ultimately resulting in the perpetuation of shared control.

(Continued on page 246)

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(Continued from page 238)

Of course Roosevelt was not merely being devious. The President found both his subordinates useful. He generally sought to create competition among subordinates by leaving amorphous divisions of power between them. He stimulated ambition and therefore harder work with half-promises of advancement which he found it inexpedient to fulfill.

To Roosevelt's many-sided mind, statesmanship was the art of making the necessary possible. He played politics on all levels because he knew that otherwise his programs would fail. His reactions were as often intuitive as intellectual.

The Secret Diary recites some of the facts which exhibited these characteristics, but it exhibits very little understanding of the processes of government. The present book is flat when contrasted with Frances Perkins' The Roosevelt I Knew or with Sherwood's Roosevelt and Hopkins. It is honest without having perspective, and it fails to convey any sense of the complexity of making representative government work effectively in an age of crises.

### Brief Comments

THE TEMPER OF WESTERN EUROPE. By Crane Brinton. Harvard. \$2.50.

This book is the result of the author's personal observations in Europe in 1952-1953. Professor Brinton finds much evidence for optimism: the increase in production and national incomes over prewar levels; the rising birth rate; the slow functional trend toward federation; the persistence of the European heritage of creativity, pluralism, "multanimity," and government by discussion. The mixed economy and the welfare state have not impaired the ability to invent, to improve, to work effectively. The attitudes and values of the Enlightenment, enriched by the modern awareness of the importance of the non-rational, survive.

In spite of his sober optimism, the author is concerned about the long-run effects on the European economy of the anti-imperialist revolutions and the autarkic and neomercantilistic nationalism of Asia, the Middle East, Africa and the Americas. The book is informal, witty, urbane and full of wise allusions which affirm the conservative continuity of the historical process.

FIRE IN THE ASHES: Europe in Mid-Century. By Theodore H. White. Sloane. \$5.00.

In reviewing European events of the past six years and the intricate network of cause and effect which created them, Theodore White has again shown his skill as an observer, analyst and reporter. Mr. White avoids the luxury of speculation as to the outcome of the stories of Pierre Bertaux, Willi Schlieker and Joe Currymen shaped by and capable of shaping their time. Instead, he gives his attention to the political, economic and sociological facts of life as seen in the ambivalent relationship of Europe and America. He urges that America get on with its most important maturation process—the co-ordination of its traditional concept of the crusade and its practical experience of the deal.

MODERN CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY. By Werner Levi. Minnesota. \$5.50.

An up-to-date analysis of China's foreign policy during the past century, based on painstaking research on Chinese patterns of thought and action, Mr. Levi's work is a valuable reference book for those who are already conversant with the affairs of China. Although the reasoning may not be entirely appealing to a Chinese mind, the conclusions are, on the whole, accurate, and the generalizations are kept to a minimum. An analytical evaluation of China's internal developments as determinants of her foreign policy has seldom been made. Despite the magnitude of the undertaking and the fact that Levi has not used the sources in the Chinese language, the book succeeds in being remarkably informative, candid and objective—a rarity in current literature on China.

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THE CHINA TANGLE: The American Effort in China from Pearl Harbor to the Marshall Mission. By Herbert Feis. *Princeton.* \$6.00.

The pervading tone of this account of American policy in China from 1941 to 1946, during the war and the critical peacemaking period, is tragic—not because of any deliberate slanting on the author's part (he shows remarkable restraint in his treatment of these controversial matters), but because of the outcome of the wellintentioned hopes and plans, the disillusionment and maze of cross-purposes. Says Mr. Feis: "I have not sought . . . either to console or condemn. But . . . I greatly hope that . . . just understanding of what occurred and why . . . will reconcile us in the task ahead of redeeming our purposes in China."

HOW RUSSIA IS RULED. By Merle Fainsod. Harvard. \$7.50.

This contribution to the Russian Research Center Studies is an impressively complete, carefully annotated, up-to-date picture of monolithic, naked power in action. The author analyzes the origins and gradual changes in the Bolshevik revolution; the establishment of party machinery and one-man rule; the growth and function of such instruments as the constitution, Soviets, bureaucracy, police and armed forces; the effect on farm and factory of the policy of incentives, indoctrination, repression and terror. The appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the Soviet system will not encourage the hope that it is about to decay from within.

RUSSIAN ASSIGNMENT. By Leslie C. Stevens. Illustrated. Little, Brown. \$5.75.

Admiral Stevens, naval attaché during Bedell Smith's—and briefly during Alan G. Kirk's—ambassadorship to Russia, has given us the most vivid picture we have of the way Russian people live today. With a knowledge of the language, the history, the art and even the political theories of Russia, and with a fundamental liking and sympathy for its people, he found his years in Moscow rewarding, often exasperating,

sometimes heartbreaking. This is a sensitive, human, delightfully written observation of Russia, vast land of contrasts.

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CHRISTIANITY, DIPLOMACY AND WAR. By Herbert Butterfield. Abingdon-Cokesbury. \$1.75.

Mr. Butterfield, professor of modern history at Cambridge University, says here more succinctly, but with his usual thoughtful grace, what he has been saying in most of his recent writing: the Anglo-American nations must not get themselves involved in a "war of righteousness"—cold or hot against Russia. The author is a sincere Christian, a British moderate, a skillful and well-trained historian; and though in a sense he is a "neutralist," it is quite clear from this book that he has no bitterness even toward American crusaders. This is a book that will annoy many readers in this country, hearten some, and should make all think a little harder.

TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY: The Second World War. Volume VI. By Winston S. Churchill. Houghton Mifflin. \$6.00.

Sir Winston Churchill's monumental account of the Second World War closes with this volume, which is written with the usual Churchillian color, phrasing and spirit, as well as a wealth of documentation.

In the "Triumph," the anxiety of the dark, dismal days of Dunkirk and Pearl Harbor, the nervous apprehension of the turning points at El Alamein, Stalingrad and Midway have been replaced by the collective power of the Grand Alliance, finally unleashed against Germany and her allies.

The "Tragedy" is the behind-the-scenes story of Russia's violations of pledges, of her treachery and ever-increasing desire for the political and economic control of her neighbors.

JAMES MADISON: Secretary of State, 1800-1809. By Irving Brant. Bobbs-Merrill. \$6.00.

This book is the fourth that Mr. Brant has written about his hero. In it, Madison's relationship to our history is told from the defeat of Burr in 1800 through the Embargo of 1807 and associated diplomatic events. It is a chronicle of Jefferson's number one boy, who as Secretary of State—and this is the author's central theme—acted more independently and on his own initiative than Henry Adams has led us to believe. As with the first three volumes, this one is done with such loving patience and crowded with such immense detail as to suggest that the fifth volume—the story of Madison as President—may prove to be a scholarly anticlimax.

A STILLNESS AT APPOMATTOX. By Bruce Catton. Doubleday. \$5.00.

Completing the trilogy begun in Mr. Lincoln's Army and Glory Road, this volume relates the grim, heroic epic of the Army of the Potomac in the last year of the Civil War. There are unforgettable pictures here (wounded men burning to death in the Wilderness), little studies (quality of draftees), poignant vignettes (Negro troops singing before Petersburg), wise comments (on prisons). Successfully presenting both the problems of command and the individual human experiences, Catton writes with authority, understanding, and a notable compassion for the fighting men, whose letters and journals provide much of the color and drama in this swiftly moving narrative.

CHEYENNE AUTUMN. By Mari Sandoz. Illustrated. McGraw-Hill. \$4.50.

Miss Sandoz, who eighteen years ago in Old Jules told the story of her father and her own pioneer youth in Nebraska, now with poignant realism brings home a dark spot in American history, when a few hundred Cheyenne Indians, hounded, hunted, and waylaid by thousands of soldiers, fled from a captivity that had brought them starvation and sickness of body and heart. The time is short—from the fall of 1878 to the end of the following winter, the distance long—a trek of two thousand harsh miles between a guarded reservation camp in Oklahoma to the mouth of the Powder River on the Yellowstone.

ACADEMIC PROCESSION: An Informal Hitory of the American College, 1636-1953. B Ernest Earnest. Bobbs-Merrill. \$4.00.

Mr. Earnest defines the purpose of Aca demic Procession as "to examine the major forces which have operated in America higher education and to evaluate the colleges of each period on the pragmatic basiof the extent to which they educated me and women to live and earn a living in the world of their times." In a book which is sometimes witty and generally remarkable lively reading, he has succeeded very well In looking at college students, their manners and mores, as well as what they studied, Mr. Earnest has also given the reade a refreshing view of American social history

EDUCATIONAL WASTELANDS: The Retreat from Learning in Our Public School By Arthur E. Bestor. Illinois. \$3.50.

"The charge which this book advances is that professional educationists, in their policy-making role, have lowered the aims of American public schools," Mr. Bestor say plainly in the first chapter of his hard punching and well-documented statement. There is a freshness in the point of view that teacher illiteracy should be of mor concern than loyalty. However, the ultimate constructive value of this critique will greatly depend upon the attitudes and activities of its readers who are able to consider the American public school system a an unsatisfactory by-product rather than preconceived plot.

VERMONT TRADITION: The Biography o an Outlook on Life. By Dorothy Canfield Fisher. Little, Brown. \$4.50.

This intensely personal book is interpretive history. The facts of Vermont's past are well known, but Mrs. Fisher puts human flesh on their dry bones. She is attempting to tell us, in terms of people living then and now, what it all means. "What I pray I may have skill to do is to see how Vermont his tory shaped, molded and created Vermon character." She adds, "I warn you that, it honesty, the title of this book should read 'What Vermont Tradition Means to Me.'

A joy to read, it is also controversial. It may be sometimes romanticized and over-optimistic. You can argue with this book, yet I don't believe future writing of any depth about Vermont will be possible without taking it into account. Mrs. Fisher's *Tradition*, Vermont or otherwise, is a contribution to the whole American understanding.

CIRCLE OF THE SEASONS: The Journal of a Naturalist's Year. By Edwin Way Teale. Illustrated with photographs by the author. Dodd, Mead. \$4.00.

Mr. Teale, who recently followed the spring from Florida to Mount Washington, now stays home for a year and writes the day-by-day diary of a naturalist. Though insects are his specialty, he knows almost as much about the ways of plants and other animals, and he turns up with an interesting reflection on the few days when nothing noteworthy is seen. The result is a book full of both information and the kind of wisdom which comes to some when they learn to see nature as a whole. It is fine either to dip into or to read straight through.

THE BEST OF TWO WORLDS. By Joseph Wood Krutch. Illustrated. Sloane. \$3.00.

Mr. Krutch introduces us in these warm and informal essays to his country retreat in Connecticut; to his frogs, birds and cats (with whom he achieves varying degrees of communication); and to the ever-changing and mysterious processes of the green world around us. He sometimes jumps from observation to generalization with the daring (and the skill) of a trapeze artist. But although one may not always accept his conclusions in these essays about animal, vegetable and mineral matters, one is persuaded that these are matters well worth pondering over, and that Mr. Krutch is, as always, a very delightful essayist.

THE WORD ON THE BRAZOS. By J. Mason Brewer. Foreword by J. Frank Dobie. Illustrated. Texas. \$3.50.

Good religion, bad religion, the threat of

Hell and the hope of Heaven were of primary importance to the Negroes who lived in the bottom lands and along the banks of the Texas Brazos River during the latter part of the nineteenth century. And the man who "put on de armuh of de Lawd," who chose to interpret "the Word" (the Bible) to the community received the critical but good-natured scrutiny of his followers. In collecting these fifty-six tales told by and about Brazos Bottoms preachers, J. Mason Brewer has made a valuable contribution to the preservation of authentic American folklore.

THE WORLD'S RIM: Great Mysteries of the North American Indians. By Hartley Burr Alexander. Foreword by Clyde Kluckhohn. Nebraska. \$4.75.

Philosopher, poet and anthropologist Hartley Burr Alexander united all his talents and sympathies in the writing of this posthumously published work. It is a series of studies in a field in which he was eminently qualified: certain ceremonies and ritual conceptions, "dramatic mysteries," of the North American Indians. Their wider interpretation, in terms of a philosophy of religious culture, shows the Indian heritage and achievement at its best. In rich, vivid and intensely poetic language, the author conveys the Indian understanding of "the dynamic particularity of men's lives," and gives new emphasis and meaning to the phrase "a common humanity."

WILD FLOWERS OF WESTERN PENNSYL-VANIA AND THE UPPER OHIO BASIN. Text by O. E. Jennings. Illustrated by Andrey Avinoff. Two volumes. *Pittsburgh*. \$60.00 the set.

Western Pennsylvania is a botanical borderland, where the balsam fir of the North meets the short-leaved pine of the South, where the coneflower of the Midwestern prairies joins the wild flowers of the Eastern coast. A scholar and an artist have united to make a handsome and valuable record of its wild flora. In one volume Dr. Jennings furnishes elaborate and conscientious notes on the characteristics and distribution of thousands of species of plants

found in the area—a life work. In another volume Andrey Avinoff provides paintings of 253 plants reproduced in 200 color plates which show the accuracy of the collector and the imaginative eye of the artist.

BOSWELL ON THE GRAND TOUR: Germany and Switzerland, 1764. Edited by Frederick A. Pottle. McGraw-Hill. \$5.00.

This third installment of the private papers of James Boswell, in the selective reading edition, is less sensational than the best-selling London Journal of 1762-3, but will be read with even greater interest by confirmed Boswellians. The happy hypochondriac of these pages no longer patterns his personality after that of other men. "I am really an original character," he announces. "Let me moderate and cultivate my originality." It is in this spirit that he moves among the courts of Germany and in this spirit that he encounters Rousseau and Voltaire. Boswell never elaborated the great experience at Ferney into a finished work of art, but the journal entries, the letters and the memoranda relating to it bring us close to the reality. Here and elsewhere the editor has handled his materials with much skill. The journal, already available in a limited edition, is elaborately annotated. The other documents, largely unpublished, will appear in full in a research edition of the Boswell papers now in preparation at Yale.

FREEDOM AND FATE: An Inner Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson. By Stephen E. Whicher. Pennsylvania. \$4.75.

"To reject Emerson utterly is to reject mankind": the honesty and conviction of this study are suggested by its last sentence. Mr. Whicher traces the movement of Emerson's thought from his first almost incredible rebellion against the world in the name of the Soul, through his difficulties with skepticism (particularly well described), to his final optimistic acceptance of things as they are. Both the rebellion and the acceptance are most difficult to do justice to; they have been rejected often enough in recent

years. Yet to reject them, as Mr. Whicher shows, is to close our ears to the compel ling power of a genuine voice. But this book is not an apology; it is the clearest, mos scrupulous account yet written of the American Sage.

of the Modern South. Edited by Louis D Rubin, Jr., and Robert D. Jacobs. Johns Hop kins. \$5.00.

These twenty-nine essays on the literature and culture of the South are loosely held together by certain premises: that the South, having lost the War Between the States, has a sense of tragedy; that the South is an agrarian economy, and that this implies many virtues unavailable to the North; that the recent flowering of South ern literature implies a general superiority of the Southern way of life. In the frame work of such attitudes, we are given essay on Allen Tate, William Faulkner, Thoma-Wolfe and—one of the best—Erskine Cald well; essays on Southern history and litera ture. New York City is repeatedly referred to with the reluctant deference with which medieval monks must have spoken of the Scarlet Woman.

# SELECTED WORKS OF SACHEVERELI SITWELL. Bobbs-Merrill. \$4.00.

The youngest of the senior Sitwells has chosen fourteen rich selections from eighof his some forty-three published volumes a lavish cross section of his omnivorous and painstaking endeavor. Mr. Sitwell gives a clue to his life and work when he write: in his introduction: "It is my belief that I have informed myself of nearly all works of art in the known world. I cannot think that anything considerable is missing Where I have not been in person, I have read and studied. I have heard most of the music of the world, and seen nearly all of the paintings." And this astounding statement is confirmed by his prodigious output. Sacheverell Sitwell is a man of unique taste and self-education, an authentic eclectic, a revitalizer of the past, an animator of the present as seen by that past.

But most of all, he is a poet deeply concerned with life and the art of living it.

COLLECTED POEMS. By Conrad Aiken. Oxford. \$10.50.

Among these thousands of lines of verse, all worked with meticulous craftsmanship to evoke music and to elaborate certain associations of ideas, occasionally there are lines which draw the reader into an inevitable experience. Too often Mr. Aiken seems to be improvising, talking about things instead of creating them. When his eye is on the world, as in *Brownstone Eclogues*, he is an exciting poet; when his eye is turned inward, as in *The Divine Pilgrim*, he is virtually unreadable. This volume is valuable for the student of literature; the general reader would be advised to read Mr. Aiken in selection.

GARDENERS AND ASTRONOMERS. By Edith Sitwell. Vanguard. \$2.75.

This seems a far cry from the poetry of Miss Sitwell's early years. Although her verse still retains its golden ring and delights with its rich humor and sensuous imagery, these poems do more than beguile the senses or create a mood. The poet's concern herein is deeply philosophical: the mystery and glory of Being, the power and vitality of organic nature, and the straits in which man finds himself today, insofar as he has been seduced into accepting himself as a mechanized being in a machine world. Miss Sitwell voices both a protest and a credo in Gardeners and Astronomers, and she reveals much power as well as brilliance and freshness of poetic creation.

THE PRESENT AND THE PAST. By Ivy Compton-Burnett. Messner. \$3.50.

In this ironic comedy, as in all her novels, Ivy Compton-Burnett makes unusual claims on the attention of the reader; for her characters are rendered through speech rather than through action or commentary, and the conversation is glancing, witty, intense and broken. Only when fitted like pieces into a mosaic does it reveal its significance. Love in all its aspects is the basic theme of the novel: the father, the husband, a first and second wife, five vitally perceptive children and the servant are all revealed in the light of their relationship to this theme. It is well worth the concentration it demands of a reader who would savor it properly.

THE LYING DAYS. By Nadine Gordimer. Simon & Schuster. \$3.95.

"The lying days of my youth"—from Yeats—are the growing-up days of Helen Shaw, who is the heroine of this perceptive novel out of South Africa. There is a succession of decisive experiences with playmates, at home and on visits, and with older people in Johannesburg. You have read novels in which color was the theme, or adolescence, first love, class distinction. Working these and other elements together, Miss Gordimer presents a richer, profounder picture on a broader canvas. Vividly you note her scenes; you follow the action eagerly. Most of all, however, you are impressed not with her craftsmanship, but with her grasp of character and her knowledge of the multitude of gestures, tones, facial expressions and idiosyncrasies by which character is revealed and identified.

LOVE IS A BRIDGE. By Charles Bracelen Flood. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.75.

From the First World War to the Second, from one Harvard generation to the next . . . that's the generous span of this novel; and the space between is full of the story of the Cobbs, Henry and Susan. In a country-club, Back-Bay, Catholic milieu, they marry, have a child, and divorce. Flood makes his settings and his people real, though not quite important enough. Written on a Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship, this first novel testifies to the young author's perceptiveness, taste and other qualities, but it is a bit lacking in urgency.

# The Reader Replies. .

THE READER REPLIES carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles which have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor, The AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Phi Beta Kappa Hall, Williamsburg, Va., and should not exceed 300 words in length except on request. Because of limitations of space, we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.—Editor.

### Freedom and Loyalty

The article "Loyalty and Freedom" by Archibald MacLeish in the Autumn, 1953, edition of The American Scholar impresses me very favorably but I still think that any person who has joined an organization which has for its objective the forceful overthrow of our government should be removed from public office or teaching position, for thereby only can we insure freedom for future generations.

Edward H. Ochsner Chicago, Illinois

Archibald MacLeish's article in the Autumn, 1953, issue of The American Scholar, entitled "Loyalty and Freedom," prompts me to give my reasons why the inevitable crises he predicts can and will be avoided by the American people: the universal belief of man in man precludes any possibility of one emotional need overbalancing another to the extent that our underlying structure might collapse, even though in the last few years that danger seems to have become both real and present. Our seeming loss of faith in freedom is the result of our apparent loss of faith in man, due largely to neglect or failure of our institutions of learning to cultivate the mind of man along human lines. Our schools and universities should include the study of man in their curriculum, as on earth there is nothing great but man, and in man there is nothing great but mind. Personal success consists of having an ideal and working aim of life that patterns good and seeks communion with God.

In the struggle for the defense of human

freedom, everyone should have developed within himself a generous nature, an open mind, the philosophy of patience and courage, faith in self and in his fellows, and an awareness of the rightness of the eternal laws, which will make him a greater victor than Bonaparte or Caesar. For such a true and lofty victor over self is capable of valuing and defending freedom.

OLIVER E. BARTHEL
Detroit, Michigan

Thank you for David Riesman's "Some Observations on Intellectual Freedom" [AS: Winter, 1953-54]. Too many intellectuals have spent valuable time and effort—not in thinking about the problem of intellectual freedom—but in "emoting" about it, engaging in incantation, and in quoting Jefferson, Milton, Mill, etc. Quotation and tradition have their uses but they can be overdone—particularly when they stand in the way of analysis of a current condition.

I have had some practical experience with the problem of intellectual freedom. I would say that much of it can be found in Mr. Riesman's "rural or small-town location" and "small colleges in fundamentalist or reactionary communities"; it can be found also in our national concept of the role and importance of trustees of public institutions. However, most intellectuals who are articulate about the problem appear too "mad" or hysterical to understand that. And so far as trustees are concorned, not only do the "professors" seem uninterested in carrying these important middlemen along with them, but there have been uncontradicted professorial statements to

the effect that trustees are useless appendages anyway, and that practicing intellectuals ought to "go it alone."

Or let me put our dilemma another way: Many a Joe Blow, back in the provinces, has a strong feeling that he knows some of the workings of American democracy a little better than Professor Einstein (and who is to assume, categorically, that he doesn't?), but he has a much more difficult time being articulate and making his voice heard on the subject.

PAUL BIXLER
Antioch College
Yellow Springs, Ohio

David Riesman's brilliant article in the Winter issue, "Some Observations on Intellectual Freedom," has performed one great service for his cause—it has pointed out what has so often been forgotten: the liberals are winning their battle.

But regardless of the soundness of his argument for open-mindedness, regardless of his convincing presentation of stultifying liberal conformity, Riesman has overplayed his hand and the implications of his argument inevitably leave his position weaker than when he started.

In the first place, the conformity of liberals (or of any group) is obviously productive of stagnation—when it is conformity as to specific positions or viewpoints. But the liberal conformity which Riesman has actually objected to is not this type of conformity—it is a conformity as to method, an eternal conformity through which new possibilities for nonconformity are opened.

The united front of liberalism, which Riesman attacks, is not a united front for liberal politics or liberal religion—it is a united front for freedom to choose liberal or conservative politics, liberal or conservative religion. While a certain amount of narrow-minded optimism pervades this latter united front (for it is felt that it will inevitably produce the former), the possibility of liberals' not adhering to it is an appalling thought.

Secondly, Riesman adopts essentially the "aberration theory" so popular with today's anti-anti-intellectuals. "America has always had its aberrations," this school points out.
"Look at the K.K.K., Huey Long, the Know-Nothings—where did they get?"

This point of view is soothing, certainly, but it also breeds complacency. The inevitable conclusion must be that withdrawal to the ivory tower, assuring one's fellow liberals that truth will out eventually, is the proper method of combat—to argue with McCarthyites is to give them a dignity they do not deserve.

But battles are not won by standing on one's dignity and the obvious superiority of one's position. While the American people have innate dignity and a sense of justice, these feelings are only effective when aroused.

Ross D. Wetzsteon Ithaca, New York

That Mr. Riesman did an admirable analytical job in his article, "Some Observations on Intellectual Freedom," seems unquestionable to this reader. The American Scholar is to be congratulated for having published it.

What does seem questionable is Mr. Riesman's apparent conclusion that the evil of McCarthyism is best fought, or minimized, by ignoring it. When an evil gets to be as sizable as McCarthyism, a cavalier disregard of its existence can hardly be considered the proper therapy.

As eminent an authority as Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas has this to say regarding the size of the evil:

Anxieties and suspicions are aroused until a community does not know what to believe or whom to trust, until even old neighbors suspect one another. More and more people conclude that the one safe thing to do is to conform: either to stand silent or to join the hunt. [New York Times, November 25, 1953.]

Mr. MacLeish's thesis that McCarthyism should be fought with the battle-axe of Milton's rhetoric may be debatable. Perhaps the rapier of a Molière or a Shaw would be a better weapon. But, whether with rapier or battle-axe, McCarthyism should certainly be combated.

Mr. Riesman's reliance on the efficacy of

mere analysis, coupled with his supercilious disregard of the need for taking positive countervailing action, has the deceptive attraction of an easy formula for optimism.

> GARIBALDI LAGUARDIA Santurce, Puerto Rico

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In his reply to Mr. Riesman in the Winter, 1953-54, number of The American Scholar, Mr. MacLeish says, "As for Mc-Carthyism . . . it is precisely in the continuing struggle against it . . . that effective freedom consists." As a general proposition that statement is, I believe, simply untrue. Effective freedom for most Americans does not consist in any such negative attitude toward a minor phase of the attempt to hold down a certain type of crime. Where is Mr. MacLeish's sense of proportion? Is the man who tosses a little sneeze powder at a party a major menace to the national health? It might even be in the long run that normal American citizens as a whole, through Mr. McCarthy's activities, will preserve more freedom than they will lose.

In the interest of semantic symmetry may I be allowed to suggest that Trumanism and MacLeishism are not altogether devoid of potential danger to this country?

PAUL W. MERRILL Altadena, California

What fun! A good egghead debate.

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There is real hope for Mr. Riesman, the immature author of "Values in Context" [AS: Winter, 1952-53], as he attempts higher things, like laughing, in his "Some Observations on Intellectual Freedom." I would suggest, if he intends to pursue his course further, that he study today's master, Walt Kelly, who suspects there is more to the human animal than mere intelligence.

A. MacLeish might enjoy Pogo more than Mr. Riesman, for he seems to recognize and accept the "dualism" in the human personality which makes Pogo go to the world series when he wants to do something serious.

I can't take sides with either Mr. Riesman or Mr. MacLeish, because I'm afraid I'm one of those mass Americans who teach Sunday school just to keep things lively for

the sociologists who decry the sad case of "American Dualism." I enjoy joining the clergy in fanning the flames of Absolute Truth. I always thought the Absolute was what intellectual curiosity was seeking.

PHYLLIS B. HAYES Indianapolis, Indiana

# The New Intellectuals and the Old Coterie

After two years of reading your publication, I have come to the realization that it is not "A Quarterly for the Independent Thinker," but simply a publication of and for a small, stagnant remnant of a united front of eggheads. Article after article pounds the same two bugaboos, McCarthy and "anti-intellectualism," in monotonous repetition. THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR contains as much diversity on basic issues as a collection of papers by scholastics debating the question of how many angels could dance on the head of a pin. All the basic premises -the goodness of the Democrats; the venality of the Republicans; the driven-snow innocence of all "intellectuals" who have been confronted with any accusation, wellfounded or not; the fact that unfavorable European opinions of us are always justified—all these things are as much taken for granted as the scholastics' belief in God.

The Scholar, in its atmosphere of ivorytower detachment, does not seem to realize that there are a great many intellectuals who found Stevenson's speeches sadly lacking in depth and sincerity, and the man himself much quicker with a quip than an original idea. There are a great many intellectuals who regard taking refuge behind the Fifth Amendment as rank cowardice, and feel that those who misuse the Amendment in that way are doing a great disservice to all educated people. But the main thing which the Scholar's editors and contributors should realize is that they are not speaking for the new generation of intellectuals who are trying to teach and be taught, influence and be influenced at the grass-roots level. The old coterie, which is represented almost exclusively in your pages, is a discredited one in their eyes. You do not speak for the new intellectuals any more than the *Daily Worker* speaks for the laboring man of this country, and unless you introduce more healthy diversity into your publication, you will lose all the respect of the younger generation. They would appreciate more Viereck and less MacLeish.

JOHN L. ARRINGTON, JR. Cambridge, Massachusetts

### The Cloth of Criticism

This is in appreciation of "Souls Among Masterpieces" [AS: Winter, 1953-54]. Professor Douglas is the child who views the work of the pseudo-weavers, takes a good, hard look and yells: But he has nothing on!

WILBERT A. STEVENS Mystic, Connecticut

### A Worthy Crack

I cannot beat down the urge to write you a note about those two particularly able and brilliantly written articles in your Winter, 1953-54, issue, "Education for Privacy" and "The Loud-Voiced Victory"; and I feel most unfortunate in never having met either Mr. ten Hoor or Mr. Cort personally.

Both writers have taken a worthy crack (Mr. ten Hoor might not admit this!) at the ignorant, and against the arrogance of the ignorant—a thing which has been growing too fast in our country, and indeed elsewhere. It is fortunate, though perhaps slightly paradoxical, that as ignorance is overcome by intellectual growth, the arrogance generally tapers off. Whether this be paradox or not, let us have more of it. As never before, we need the decency that comes with wisdom, intelligence, breeding, understanding—not only for our individual selves but at least a few others also.

Mr. ten Hoor, I presume, is not too concerned about being in the weekly news (a magazine known as *Time*). But we are glad to see it, except that no mention was made of the close connection between The American Scholar and Phi Beta Kappa. Can we not stay aristocratic, as I am sure Mr.

Cort agrees we should, and still be a wee bit publicity-minded?

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### A Limited View

"Man is the measure of things" is what Max Eastman's article in the Winter, 1953-54 issue of The American Scholar on "The Cardinal Virtues" seems to say. I just happen not to believe it, although I am not a supernaturalist.

Growth, Mr. Eastman says, is man's salvation. But from what source do men get their power to grow? Is not man a created thing as well as a creator? It seems strange to me that unprovincial men should come to believe in what seems to me a provincial view that man is an orphan in the universe—which interpreted means, I suppose, that whatever is back of man is dead. What evidence is there that that is dead?

I believe with Mr. Eastman that the virtues do not require supernatural sanctions. But I still believe in God, and I am not expecting that God will die. In other words, I believe that something great and good has been operative in the universe, that it still is operative, and that no mortal has sufficient evidence to conclude that through time and beyond it won't continue to be operative. In this, I think, there is ground for hope; but Mr. Eastman rules out hope and substitutes growth—in my judgment, a lesser virtue.

Mr. Eastman also rules out faith. He would "suspend judgment until facts are known." But all the facts can't be known when man is finite. Therefore, Mr. Eastman would at times exclude judgment and not just suspend it. But man is crippled at such times if he is not free to walk—that is, to form judgments—in part by faith.

Mr. Eastman may change, since he advocates growth and open-mindedness. Some time ago, W. T. Stace wrote "Man Against Darkness" for the *Atlantic Monthly*. I understand he now no longer believes that man's condition is that bad.

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# THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

VOLUME 23

Summer, 1954

NUMBER 3

# American Thought: The Angle of Vision

MAX LERNER

THE AMERICAN AVERSION to intellectual system-building is strik-1 ing when contrasted with Continental thought. Perhaps those who felt sure they were shaping in social actuality what Jefferson called an "empire for freedom" did not hunger for empire-building in the realm of the mind. Daniel Boorstin has suggested, in The Genius of American Politics, that the reason Americans have found political theory superfluous is that they have accepted the "givenness" of their institutions; and where something is "given," it needs no laborious definition. In the European sense, Americans have had little "grand theory," whether of the state, the economy, the society, the culture, Nature or God. In a number of the towering figures—Jefferson and Lincoln in political thinking, James and Peirce in philosophy, Veblen in social theory—one finds a rich array of fragments rather than an artfully laid out master plan. Peirce despaired of ever making his philosophical ends meet, and both Emerson and Whitman flaunted the contradictions in their thinking. Americans have a fear of rigidifying thought. They believe that forms are empty-an antipathy to formal thinking which has caused them to shy away from programs of long-range

3 MAX LERNER is now a professor of American Civilization and Dean of the Graduate School at Brandeis University and a columnist on the New York Post. This article is a section of his book which will be published in the winter by Simon and Schuster under the title America as a Civilization.

social change. Thus American thought is tentative, fragmented, directed at the immediate object, and open to change at both ends.

Except for the brief period of the Puritan oligarchy, American thinkers have also been largely free of the appeal to authority and revelation. One of their dilemmas has been to square their basic nonconformism with the stability required by property and investment. When property was riding highest, firm in the saddle of power, the nonconformism almost dropped out of American thought—as it did through much of the quarter-century from the Civil War to the Populist revolt. American thinkers have been at their best in their anti-authoritarianism: in the dicta of Jefferson and Madison on freedom of thought, in the pamphleteering of the Jacksonians, in Calhoun's plea for a veto-power by which political minorities could hold their place, in Thoreau's doctrines of "civil disobedience," in the thunderbolts of Henry Demarest Lloyd against Standard Oil, in Brooks Adams' gloomy predictions of "centralization and decay," in William James's "pluralistic universe," in Justice Holmes's "can't help's," in Veblen's polemics against "absentee owners." Even American conservatism, unlike that of Europe's ruling groups, has relied less on authoritarianism than on the attraction of the Big Money.

Every generalization about American thought can be offset by a counter-generalization. Suppose you mention the lack of mystical thinkers: except for some of the early Puritan divines you will be on good ground; yet in Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, James and Faulkner there is a remarkable power in the handling of symbolism. If you note how much of American thought has been secular and rationalist, you are confronted in reply by the tradition damning the merely rational, from the divines who denied that it could encompass the mysteries of God's ways with man, to the latter-day thinkers who find that the concept of a purely rational man excludes all the half-aberrant, half-heroic ways by which men belie the blueprints of their minds.

If you deny tragic depth in American thought, there are Hawthorne and Melville again to refute you; and Mark Twain, whose comic mask scarcely hides his pessimism of spirit; and Lincoln, whose tragic sense belied the humorous anecdotes by which he

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tried to make the ordeal of civil war tolerable. If you say that American thought has a feet-on-the-ground realism, you must correct the picture with the millennialist tracts spawned by the experimental communist settlements, and the creative utopian classics of Bellamy, Donnelly and Howells. Finally, if you say that American thought—like the American class system—remained pluralistic instead of single-tracked, and was hostile to any scheme of rigid determinism, a minority report would again note the determinism of Frederick Jackson Turner, of Henry and Brooks Adams, of Veblen, and Beard.

Certain historical trends, at least, are clear. American thought has moved from the utopian and millennialist to a focusing on the calculable future, from a single-factor determinism in history to the more complex multiple-factor view, from religious to secular, from idealist to empiricist, from focusing on purposes to focusing on means, from absolutist to pragmatic, from radical to reformist or conservative. On some themes it has gone through cyclical alternations of mood and emphasis. But always there has been the steady beat of change in American life, carrying with it a constant change in the angle of vision of the American thinkers.

In a search for the roots of American thought the first clue is in the interrelations of religion and capitalism. The quest that led to the settlement of America, from the beginning of the seventeenth century to the middle of the twentieth, was a search at once for freedom of conscience and for the El Dorado of the big money. Both quests were utopian in aiming at an ideal community; both were stubbornly practical, responding to felt needs. American social thought was thus, from the start, compounded of conscience and practicality.

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The first expression of the American conscience took the form of Puritanism—the fullest amalgam of religion, economics and politics within a single mold that Americans ever achieved. Although the Puritan strain came to be watered down, American thought never wholly lost its preoccupation with God's design on the American continent and with the alternate beat of conscience and acquisitiveness. This suggests a key problem in American in-

tellectual history: how did the early absolutism of conscience turn into the pragmatism of the later period, and how have strong elements of both managed to coexist in the American mind?

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A crucial link between the two was individualism. Since a man's conscience was in his own keeping, he had to allow others also to answer to theirs alone. Thus religious laissez faire was a strong source of American individualism. It was reinforced by the doctrine of "calling." Puritan thought was dedicated to the City of God and an unremitting enmity to the Adversary. "Calling" started as the reception of grace which marked the commitment to God and the release from the Adversary; it grew into the economic "calling" by which a man's vocation and its accumulated fruits became an outward sign of inner grace. Americans are so concerned with private property not because they are made of more grasping human stuff than others, but because their culture developed in a climate where a man's individuality was linked with property as a sign of grace, just as it is linked with his conscience as a witness of his identity. The individualist strain was further reinforced by the Christian allegory—the tradition of willingness to incur martyrdom for conscience.

A final link was needed before the chain of thought forming American individualism could be complete. This was the doctrine of natural rights, with its origins in European thought and a life history of its own in its American locale. It gave a metaphysical basis to the civil-liberties tradition in America, which holds that the freedoms of thought and utterance, like freedom of worship, are rooted in the "laws of Nature and of Nature's God." Through the link of "Nature's God," much of the emotion attaching to the allegory of martyrdom as well as the doctrine of grace was carried over into the "natural order." Americans came to regard everything related to their individualism as part of that natural order—not only their rights to freedom, but also their rights to property.

This freedom-property complex has dominated American thinking throughout the nation's history. It managed to combine the strongly mystical intensity of seventeenth-century thought with the deism of the eighteenth century, the world of transcendence with that of rationalism. To the deeply religious it offered the nourish-

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ment of belief; to the skeptical and rationalist it offered secular sustenance. To the nineteenth-century mind it made possible the linking of social progress with individual freedom. For the nationalists it provided a *mystique* by which freedom, capitalism and individualism combined to explain the success of the American experiment.

Thus was formed a pattern woven of individualism, Puritanism, conscience, vocation, the allegory of martyrdom, the belief in natural rights, the passion for freedom, and the clinging to property. Within it there have been swings of emphasis—cycles of thought moving spirally in response to the needs and changes of American life.

In its origins, as we have seen, the dominant strain was religious and absolutist. But the sharp advance of science and the democratic impact of the frontier undercut this emphasis. As a result there was a movement toward religious tolerance, the multiplying of sects, and the undermining of authoritarianism, which set the pattern for American religious thought.

In the 1820's and 1830's, new winds of doctrine blew westward from Europe in the form of German mysticism and merged with the democratic energies of Western farmers and Eastern intellectuals. The leaders of this transcendentalist movement were Emerson, Brownson, and the Concord group. Strongly idealist in its philosophical roots, it contained within itself the counterpoint to Jacksonian tough-mindedness. Its historians and philosophers saw in the American experience, as in the whole religious experience, the working out of a transcendent idea of good or truth. But some of them began to identify this idea with the good of the common people, the welfare of majorities, and the truth of democracy, from which it was only a step to the reformism which made social gains, rather than a transcendent idea in history, the test of action and thought. As the seedbed for much that was to follow, this strain held within itself the beginnings of hardheaded movements for reform, along with utopian and millennial schemes. Eventually its discordance grew too great to be contained within a single school; and as it burst, the fragments flew in many directions. But

during its "Golden Day," its core lay in the strength which the American democratic experience gave to the fusion of German philosophical mysticism with the original intensity of American religious feeling.

In formal terms transcendentalism hardened into a bloodless academic idealism. But its more important offshoots were not in formal philosophy but in the "democratic vistas" of Walt Whitman and the sense of excitement about the energies of the rising nation. Between the Age of Jackson and the Age of Big Business, the driving force in American social thought was the search for a base on which these expanding national energies could build. For a time the struggle over slavery channeled the search into questions of constitutional law and political theory. Calhoun sought a theory to protect the minority rights of the South and the slaveowning property interest without breaking with the basic idea of a federal union. As Louis Hartz has pointed out, he did not see that the logic of the Secession movement led to a cult of sections which were nations in themselves, and which found a fighting faith in the rightness of their own "peculiar institution." In the North there was a similar groping for an absolutism of individual freedom, which in turn did not dare envisage the cost of the Civil War.

With the end of the War two opposing mystiques emerged—Whitman's "leaves of grass" democracy and the Divine Right of Property. Each formed a complex of religion, politics and economics, and around them the forces of radicalism and conservatism took up their positions. When the gap between laissez faire and social welfare became too obvious after the Civil War, conservative thought called into play the new popular interest in the Darwinian theories. The jungle character of the economic struggle was frankly admitted, but it was justified and even glorified by "Social Darwinism" on the ground that Nature had decreed it. The new "natural law" came to be "natural selection" in the triumph of the "fit" who survived.

The stretch from the turn of the century to the New Deal saw a movement of pragmatism that reached into law, politics, history, education, business, labor, science, and even art and religion. Its seminal minds in philosophy were Peirce, James, Dewey. In eco-

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nomics Veblen maintained a withering fire against the abstractions of the English classical school and the Austrian "marginal utility" school, championing a home-grown attitude that studied economic "institutions" in their whole life-context; and Wesley Mitchell applied his insights to the study of business cycles. In law Holmes asserted that "the life of the law is not logic but experience," asking how the "reasonable man" would assess the customs of his group, and what the "bad man" would be unable to get away with; and Brandeis developed the technique of shaping the judicial judgment less to the logic-chopping of "mechanical jurisprudence" than to the community experience. In history James Harvey Robinson and Charles Beard gave new vitality to the relation between social movements and the history of ideas, emphasizing the driving forces of class interest and the ways by which men rationalized these drives. In "progressive education," Dewey stressed the growth and experience of the child as he "learns by doing."

Through these variations there ran the common thread of the revolt against formalism—that truth did not lie in absolutes or in mechanical formulas, but in the whole operative context of individual growth and social action in which the idea was embedded. This intellectual base made possible, as it also expressed, the political reform movements from Theodore Roosevelt to Franklin Roosevelt.

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The most recent phase of the cyclical swing has been a revolt against the pragmatic revolt. It has taken the form of an attack on what Lewis Mumford has called "the pragmatic acquiescence"—including chiefly the phases of American culture that vulgarized the meaning of pragmatism, reducing truth to whatever "works," thereby casting out other standards of value. As in religion, American intellectuals have again been groping for a transcendental faith, turning against the pragmatic on the ground that it ignores the depths of the psyche and the tragic dimensions of life. To some extent this meant a rejection of the humanist matter-of-factness associated with realism in philosophy, law, economics and politics; but as a repudiation of mass-values, it was also a humanist reassertion of the role of the individual personality as against the operation of group interests and the calculus of mass-welfare.

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Thus the cyclical swing in the history of American thought has moved in a wide arc from the tough to the mystical, back to the pragmatic, and again to the transcendental. To some extent the cleavage between realists and pragmatists on one side and idealists and absolutists on the other has measured roughly a cleavage between the progressive and conservative forces. This parallelism can be carried too far. Thoreau and Brownson, each in his own way a radical in politics, were transcendentalists in philosophy. Veblen started as a Kantian, as did John Dewey. The whole philosophy of conservative Big Business thinking, on the other hand, is thoroughly pragmatic.

However it must be qualified in application, the parallel does hold. The reformist appeal has generally been from social actuality to social possibility, from the facts of poverty and inequity to the potentials of a fast-moving society which can minimize both. Most liberal and radical reformers have made a habit of thinking in these terms of the socially actual and the socially possible. For the conservative, on the other hand, the absolute and the transcendental offer the advantage of being abstracted from the immediate struggles of society, hanging somewhere (as Holmes put it) as a "brooding omnipresence in the sky," never having to be brought down to earth.

Unlike the European societies where the radical movements have a Marxist intensity, in America it is the conservative movements that have carried the sharper edge. They have appealed to the absolutes of economic freedom and the sanctity of property, while the reformers and liberals (in whose minds the Marxist systems never struck deep roots) have appealed mainly to the moderate goals of progress and the common welfare. This is not to say that American political thought has been dominated by the holders of power. Even with the advantage of power on their side, the conservative thinkers have thought of themselves as fighting a rear-guard action, just as the reformers, on their side, seem forever to be defending civil liberties and are ridden with a sense of ineffectualness. The trait common to both is a Promethean sense of waging an unequal battle to overthrow the reigning divinities. This may shed some light not only on the American character, but

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on American political society, suggesting that power is distributed more diffusely in it than the contending groups are willing to admit.

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Of the great political angles of vision, the radical tradition has fared hardest. Its handicap at the start was the fact that the American Revolution was colonial and not social. Once it was over and British imperialism pried loose, the radicals had no enemy target left. Since there had been no social revolution, they could not, like the French after 1789, fight to maintain its gains; with no dictatorships on the American scene, there could be no resistance movements; with no tyrannies, there could be no conspiracies of tyrannicide. Except for the limited episode of Dorr's Rebellion, there were not even—as with the Chartists in England—any grand failures of radical action to be retrieved. As a result, American radicalism remained a series of sporadic and sometimes eccentric flare-ups which kept alive the equalitarian dream, but had no sustained program, no continuing party, nor even a body of common doctrine.

It did serve as the intellectual left wing of the great liberal movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This was true of some of Jefferson's circle who attacked the newly rising capitalist class as agrarian radicals but whose ideas proved usable in a later industrial era. There was also a Jacksonian left wing which saw the worker and farmer as protagonists in the struggle against the tyranny of money. The anti-slavery left wing was in abolitionist thinkers like Garrison, Wendell Phillips and Theodore Parker, who prepared the ground for the slavery struggle, and in the Radical Republicans who laid down a devastating fire against Lincoln's compromises. In the 1890's, left-wing thinkers like Henry Demarest Lloyd gave form to the Populist drive against railroads and trusts which made Bryanism possible; nor could the victory of Wilson's "New Freedom" in 1912 have taken place if it were not for novelists David Graham Phillips, Howells, and Frank Norris; muckrakers Lincoln Steffens and Upton Sinclair; and constitutional critic J. Allen Smith. Finally the New Deal had intellectual roots in Veblen, Beard and Parrington; and Roosevelt's left-wing critics proved as troublesome as Lincoln's.

There were also more cantankerous intellectual movements

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which spent their energies in isolated radical episodes—the Fourierists and other experiments in communal living, the movement for "People's Banks" in Jackson's era, the schemes for currency reform, the plans for salvation through Henry George's "single tax" or other creeds, the "twenty-four hour violence" of episodes from Shays' Rebellion to Coxey's Army and the Bonus marchers, the sustained violence of the IWW "Wobblies" and their syndicalist dream of "one Big Union," the succession of third-party movements including that of LaFollette in 1924 and Wallace in 1948. Despite their crotchety character, the radical thinkers released some of the sturdier energies of American striving.

What then accounts for their final failure? Some clues will be found in the pace of social change and the constant sense of dynamism, the moving American frontier, the persistence of the openclass system. Most important is the folk belief in the going economic and social system. Labor support, without which there could be no class base for radical thought, was given not to the radicals but to the liberal reformers. The Socialist Party, which was bidding for popular support as late as 1920, failed because its dogma of a future commonwealth and of "pie in the sky" seemed unreal to workers who were finding life better here and now. The Communists-if they can be considered radicals and not reactionariesreached their peak of influence in the Great Depression and the early New Deal; in the late 1930's and 1940's they became entangled in the net of Party conspiracy, moral betrayal and the gyrations of the Party line, and dribbled away what little remaining support they had.

The radicals could not compete with the liberal reformers in an immediate concrete program, yet had no long-range program. They could not preach "revolution" effectively in a society where actual revolution—in the form of continuous technical and social change—was taking place all around. Nor could they rally the embittered, since even the hopeless retained a shred of hope for their children's future. They could find no rich soil for their dogma in the minds of people who every decade were turning more strongly toward immediate goals and pragmatic means.

What the radicals succeeded in doing was important: they re-

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affirmed the equalitarian impulse by fresh challenges to swollen power, injustice, human indifference about suffering. Denouncing corruption, plutocracy and the vested interests, they were obsessed with a dualism between the angels of light and the princes of darkness. They tried to measure American institutions against the original vision, harking back to an American Eden before the Fall. Not content to gloss over class difference and struggles, they saw that all exercise of political power involves conflict. What they did in their episodic attacks was to feel out the strength of the dominant economic minority, testing whether it had gone slack or retained its creativeness. The answer they got was a double one: from the managerial groups, the wavering evidence that they could continue their revolution of production; from the liberals, the resolve to organize this production within a system of controls which could raise living standards for all.

Thus the fragmented American radicalism, little more than a succession of spasmodic local movements of protest and passion, served to keep both the conservatives and liberals alert. Despite the low estate of radical thought during the cold-war era, an intellectual pattern so constant through American history is likely to find renewal.

The conservative intellectual tradition, while it has lacked the Thoreaus, Whitmans, Debses and Dreisers that radicalism has had, has a stronger hold on the American mind. Unlike their European parallels, who relied upon tradition and authority, religion, stateworship, family and order, American conservatives boldly captured the citadel of the liberal enemy by taking over its high ground of individualism and natural rights. They believed that men have natural—that is, deeply rooted—rights, but insisted that there can be no fulfillment of those rights where the state intervenes in individual economic choices. Thus they appealed to the position of the individual in an indestructible order of Nature that precedes human history. They attempted to build a solid intellectual support for property by invoking the same humanist and individualist symbols which have sustained the liberals in their attacks on property. Like them they refrained from too explosive a discussion of ends.

They have taken for granted the same goal as the liberals—that of the "American dream." But, in rhetoric at least, they almost appropriated the symbol as their own; and once in their hands, it has been stripped of its equalitarian emphasis and gives property overtones.

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But the conservatives could not maintain this position without making serious concessions on concrete issues—trade unions, minimum wages, child labor, social insurance, public control of power sources, corporate monopoly. While retaining the catchwords of individualism and freedom, they cemented their hold on men's minds by premising a natural order presided over by neither God nor justice, nor even equality of opportunity, but the brute struggle of the market. It was against this conservative tradition that the progressive reformers of the turn of the century directed their assaults. For under the guise of freedom, conservative thought had built an iron trap in which there was no escape from the ruthlessness of brute struggle and survival, including the changes and chances of the business cycle. More than anything else this furnished the emotional drive behind the reformism of the New Deal.

In another sense also the conservatives became too rigid—in their view of the human situation as a constant. ("You can't change human nature.") This pessimist determinism was at the opposite pole from the perfectionist and plastic view of the human situation which the radicals had. The conservative view was reinforced by the sense of sin in the tradition of evangelical religion. But it could not be maintained in a shifting society and an expanding economy where the individual was always re-creating his career, and where the evidences of the transformation wrought by man's will and intelligence were witness against the over-rigid view of human traits.

The deepest source of the strength of conservatism has been its succession of social mystiques. The earliest was the cult of the aristocracy—or, as Fisher Ames put it, the government of "the wise, the rich, and the good." This was followed by the cult of the Constitution, to which Marshall and Story so powerfully contributed. This in turn was followed by the cult of property in the natural order, of which the appeal to Social Darwinism was a phase. Property came to be seen as something sanctioned at once by

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"Nature and Nature's God," and further fortified by being linked with the worker who was worthy of the fruits of his labor, and the businessman who had mingled his managerial skill with the products of industry. The most recent *mystique* for conservatives is that of anti-liberal nationalism, especially powerful in an era of war and cold war. The premise is that American power rests on its property institutions, and that attacks on the sanctity of property become subversive of the nation itself.

With all this intellectual panoply, America has nevertheless no articulate conservative philosophy and no outstanding conservative thinkers who can rank with Hamilton, John Adams, and Calhoun among the earlier thinker-statesmen or with William Graham Sumner among social scientists. In political action, rather than formal thought, the best of the recent conservatives have been men like Chief Justice Hughes, Henry Stimson and Wendell Willkie, who held fast to what was best in the tradition but yielded generously to necessary changes. Unfortunately the center of the stage in conservatism is now held by the racist, repressive and ultranationalist reactionaries who in every generation produce demagogic figures that strut on the political scene for a brief space and live out their transient and paranoid existence.

It is in the liberal intellectual tradition that American belief has characteristically expressed itself. "The earth belongs to the living," said Jefferson, striking the grand theme that liberalism has since followed. Its credo has been progress, its mode optimist, its view of human nature rationalist and plastic: it has used "human rights" rather than "property rights" as its ends, but has concentrated on the means of social action. It has made "expedient change" an integral part of its methods, and has taken from science the belief in the tools of reason and the tests of validity. It has kept its fighting edge through the emotional force of the reformist impulse.

Latterly the liberal tradition has come in for drastic criticism from liberals, whose new intellectual posture—especially in the academies—seems to be a strain of habitual self-deprecating irony. Much is said of the failure of liberal thought. Certainly there is a need for redefining it within the psychological realities of our time.

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The weaknesses of the liberal tradition are clear enough. First, it is indebted for its individualism to the atomistic thinkers like Hume and Locke who could reduce a society to its members but could not link individuals with each other to form a society. Even the Christian allegory has not repaired this weakness: its willingness to sacrifice came to mean in the American context mostly sacrifice for one's own freedom or identity and not for others, and did not issue in a sense of society. Thus liberalism built a trap for itself with an atomistic philosophy which strengthened the hold of jungle individualism on the American mind.

The second weakness flows from the alliance with pragmatic thought. The strength of this alliance enabled liberalism to focus on concrete situations for reform, undeflected by dogma and abstraction, but made it also vulnerable to the changes and chances of history, squeezing it dry of final values. The "open mind" sometimes became a drafty cave of the winds, the questioning spirit became merely ironic, the revolt against past codes became an extreme relativism which left no standards by which to measure values. Eric Goldman has pointed out how this relativism, a scourge with which to lash the conservatives of the 1890's, turned into an engine of disillusionment in the 1920's. "The trouble with us reformers," said J. Allen Smith, "is that we made reform a crusade against standards. Well, we smashed them all, and now neither we nor anybody else have anything left."

Finally the liberal's view of human nature has stressed the aspirations of the American dream and the supremacy of reason. The more sophisticated thinkers—notably Reinhold Niebuhr—have recognized the irrationalism of the human mind and the limits of willed human action. But most liberals assume (as did the sociologist Lester Ward) that men can transform their environment and fashion their society as their own work of art. Thus the liberal tends to reduce everything to environment, including human nature itself, which becomes plastic material to be molded by reason, without allowing for the stubborn propensities of men.

Yet, however vulnerable, liberalism has emerged as the central expression of the American democratic faith. It is not tied forever

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to the blind worship of experience of which it has been guilty in the past half-century. It has proved intellectually flexible, capable of enrolling determinists like Turner and Beard, and even Social Darwinists like Holmes, but is more at home with the more fluid thinkers. It has absorbed both the optimism of the idealist thinkers and the cynicism of the materialists. But it could evoke from Morris Cohen equal scorn for "those who spin the world out of ideas, and those who look to earth, air, fire, and water to explain all human phenomena." Its best expression has been in thinkers like Charles H. Cooley and George H. Mead, who saw the levels of meaning in the "self" which interacts with the "group," and also saw how complex the web of causation is. It has drawn upon the currents of religious faith, and at the same time based itself strongly upon the ground of scientific method. There are strands of thought that unite figures like Carl Schurz, Henry George, Richard T. Ely, Tom Watson, Bryan, Terence Powderly, Lincoln Steffens, Ida Tarbell, Clarence Darrow, William Allen White, Parrington, Harold Stearns, Herbert Croly, LaFollette and even H. L. Mencken. Add to these the statesmen-thinkers from Jefferson, Madison and Lincoln to Wilson and the two Roosevelts, and it is apparent that liberalism has furnished the dominant political and intellectual climate of America.

Its strength lies in providing an angle of vision for viewing America and a fighting faith for the freedom of the person, higher living standards, and a more spacious way of life. As Maury Maverick phrased it with a perhaps oversimplified pungency, liberalism has always meant "freedom plus groceries"—not only (one may add) for some of the people but for all, not only sometimes but all the time.

Given this angle of vision, it has developed an armory of facts and argument and a passion for battle in its concrete struggles—against the "octopus" of the big corporation, against rate-discrimination by railroads, for free public education, for civil rights, for Negro equality, for religious freedom, for land conservation, for trade-union organization, for aid to farmers at the mercy of a shifting market, for state control of public utilities, for public use

of natural reces, for public development of hydro-electric power, for wage-an abour legislation, for women's rights, for social security.

These are, of course, piecemeal reforms which do not add up to a unified program. The radicals have also expressed their disdain for liberals because of the lack of toughness in fighting their big enemies. The charges strike home. Yet the radical movements that sought to supply the long-range plans and the tough means have sputtered fitfully and died, while conservatism which scorns the liberal vision finds that it must rely mainly on social power rather than on intellectual persuasion. American liberalism is one of the few movements in history which have not been based on authority or force yet have held their dominance in the empire of the mind. Its basic premise has been in a majority will which is capable of organizing itself effectively when the obstructions are blasted away by the dynamite of facts and ideas: The failures to reach the goal have been frequent and glaring, but they have been recognized and taken in stride.

This does not mean that liberalism has been free of the tensions of constant struggle. Actually one of its emotional drives is a flagellant sense of guilt over the gap between the democratic rhetoric and the social reality. With it there is a too credulous hope that all would be well if only some obstacle were removed, some enemy overcome, some reform achieved. It has been one of the illusions of liberal reformers that the only changes required to build Jerusalem on America's green and promised land are changes in social mechanisms. If only the newspapers were in the hands of the right people, if only there were a third party, if only there were currency reforms, if only the press allowed a free play of opinion, if only the schools paid their teachers enough and adopted progressive techniques, if only the movies showed fewer crime pictures and television reduced the violence of its programs. This "heart's desire" liberalism has a counterpart in the breakdown of perspective among paranoid liberals who feel surrounded by devil-figures. Perhaps with greater maturity and a psychology that cuts deeper, the liberals will manage to achieve a long view without losing their militancy.

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# Pages from the Autobiography of Ellen Glasgow

In 1914 I SPENT A PART OF THE SPRING and summer in England. I remember perfect weather, and for the first time, I met those living English authors whose work I could admire without reservation. The American authors I admired so heartily were all dead; for it was impossible for even the most sanguine imagination to restore Hawthorne, Thoreau, Emerson, or Poe to the ungrateful flesh. Even Hawthorne's fame was slightly dimmed, because, it was felt that, after all, he was deficient in "brightness." In the case of Emerson, there was also a lack of "brightness," though there remained, oddly enough, an abundance of light. At this time, or a little earlier, one of our most respected critics was declaring "In my opinion The Awakening of Helena Richie is a greater book than Anna Karenina, because it presents a higher ideal of womanhood...."

Early in June I spent some unforgettable hours with Thomas Hardy and his fine young wife, to whom he owed the subdued tranquillity of his later years. My friend Louise Collier Willcox was with me, and, in response to an invitation from Mrs. Hardy, we drove out from Dorchester to tea at Max Gate. The afternoon was brilliant with one of those rare English days in which heaven appears to touch the earth. Our reception was charming, and I had no difficulty in hearing Hardy's voice. Somewhat to my surprise, for I had heard that he could not be made to speak of his work, Hardy talked to me, freely and frankly, about his books. His poetry would outlive his novels, he believed, and he gave the impression of caring little for the Wessex Tales, which had brought him fame.

<sup>☼</sup> These excerpts from Miss Glasgow's autobiography, to be published in the autumn by Harcourt, Brace and Company as *The Woman Within*, are presented here for the first time by permission of Frank Morley and Irita Van Doren, her literary executors.

He did not hesitate to say that he considered *The Dynasts* his greatest work (he may have said "best") and he was pleased when he found that I had read it all, and was able to repeat from the "Semichorus of the Years":

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O Immanence, that reasonest not, In putting forth all things begot, Thou build'st Thy house in space—for what?

Hardy smiled. "Not many have read that."

His reticence was attractive to me, for it made whatever he said well worth the saying. He was small in stature, and, unlike so many other old men, especially old men of letters, he was immaculately neat in his appearance. His face was small and worn to sharpness, but the skin was singularly clear, with a tinge of red on the cheekbones; and in both his expression and his manner there was the quality of wistfulness, as if he wished to be kind, but was not quite sure he was going about it in the right way.

I told him I thought "A Blinded Bird" the most beautiful of his shorter poems. He replied that he liked it, too, and that it was written to a real bird. When we talked of his novels, I confessed that I could never decide whether I cared most for *The Return of the Native* or for *Jude the Obscure*. He told me with pride that his wife had read all his novels when she was twelve years old. His face lighted with pleasure, as if he were relating something extraordinary. Of all the human beings I have known, none could have been more natural or less pretentious. From the beginning, it was easy to reach an understanding. In our philosophy of life we soon touched a sympathetic chord; for he told me that he also had suffered all his life over the inarticulate agony of the animal world. "I have often wondered," he added, with that wistful smile, "whether I'd choose the lot of a wild or of a domestic animal; and I think, all things considered, I'd choose the lot of the wild."

His wire-haired terrier Wessex, afterwards famous in literary biography, never left his side, except to jump up in a chair at the table when tea was brought in. He was a very attractive little dog, not yet a year old, and as his master remarked, affectionately, "always ready for his tea."

#### PAGES FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ELLEN GLASGOW

As we drove away from the house, in the late afternoon, I looked back and saw Hardy standing in the doorway with Wessex in his arms.

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A world war and a personal life and death came and passed before I saw him again. I could not have believed, on that cloudless day in June, that thirteen years, of anxiety and horror and a little joy, would go by before I spent another spring and summer in England. Nor did I suspect that this would be my last glimpse of Hardy, who died a few months after my visit.

In London, I had hesitated whether or not I should go down to Dorchester. "I shouldn't go, if I were you," Hugh Walpole had said to me. "I haven't seen him since the war, but I hear he is much changed."

Still I hesitated, but, in the end, I wrote to Mrs. Hardy, and I received, by return post, a cordial note asking me to stop for tea when we were motoring by Dorchester. She wrote that Hardy had been ill, but he was now much better, though he was able to see very few visitors. And she added: "How kind of you to remember our dear old Wessex. He died of old age just three months ago. Somebody has given us a Persian kitten, but it can never fill the place of Wessex in our hearts." Few incidents have given me a more vivid sense of the relentless passage of time. Only a short while before, I had seen Wessex as a puppy, and now, after so brief a period, he was dead of old age.

There were two other guests, the Tomlinsons, father and son, at Max Gate that afternoon, in 1927, and the conversation was more general. But Hardy himself had not changed. He was still gentle, considerate, with a poetic fire in his glance when he spoke of something that moved him. They had a handsome blue Persian kitten, but he told me he missed Wessex more and more. "Wessex was so fond of the wireless," he said, "that I used to get up early in the morning and come downstairs to turn it on for him." And, presently, he took me out into the garden, and showed me the little grave where Wessex was buried. Then we talked of Stonehenge, and the way it had still preserved its ancient air of sacrifice. When I spoke of his novels, he dismissed them with a gesture, and replied that he was interested, now, only in verse. His poetry he appeared

to love deeply, and I have come to wonder whether he was right, after all, in his estimate of his own work. It is possible, since poetry has an enduring fibre, that some of his poems may outlast his great fiction.

I was glad that I had not taken Hugh Walpole's advice, and that I had come again to Max Gate; but, as I left, I had a premonition, stronger than certainty, that I should never see Hardy again. In the autumn, after I returned to America, his death was announced, and I read, then, among other appraisals of his work, an article, by "a distinguished American critic," which contained a strange comment upon Hardy's personality. It seemed that this man of letters had called on Hardy some months before his death, and after this visit, when the convenient reporter had asked the American critic his impression, he replied in the single word, "stony." Well, if I had been asked my impression, I also might have replied in a single word, but that one word would have been, "sympathetic."...

But we must go back thirteen years, to the summer of 1914. Another perfect day was the one we spent with Joseph Conrad and his family at Capel House in Kent, where they were then living. Although Conrad's work, with the exception of *Heart of Darkness*, has not, in my judgment, lasted so well, at the time of my visit to him, I was familiar with every book, and with almost every line, he had written. And I found the man very attractive, with a lovable personality, capricious and fascinating. His dark, animated face, with the prominent cheekbones and the narrow chin, held a shy woodland charm of its own. He had a strong foreign accent, and his occasional slips in English idiom increased the impression of other-worldliness. Yet he was a brilliant talker, and he was never at a loss, apparently, for a word or a magic phrase.

From the first instant of meeting, I felt we were friends, and I was gratified when he told Louise Willcox that he thought I was doing better work than any other American woman novelist. He showed me some of his manuscripts, with scarcely a word left unchanged, for he was a patient and precise craftsman. "I'll come back next summer," I said, lightly, as we parted; but I never saw him again. Within a few months, England was at war, and my summers abroad came to a sudden pause. After that one day in Kent,

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I have always loved the memory of Conrad; and when he came to New York to visit his publishers, I had a characteristic letter from him, telling me that he had hoped to see me in Richmond before he sailed; but his chronic malady, the gout, had attacked him, violently, since he came to America, and he was compelled to bring his visit to an abrupt close. It was for him, I heard, an un happy visit; and before I again saw England, he had died and was resting in Canterbury. But I shall always think of him as a loss friend, with a natural innocence of heart which left him too utterly at the mercy of circumstances. One longed to defend both him and his fame from unscrupulous exploitation.

A few evenings after we had been to Capel House, we dined with the Galsworthys, and I remembered that Conrad had told me that he was the first person to see John and Ada after they went away together. It was a happy evening. Mrs. Galsworthy had (and, I suppose, still has) a most appealing personality. She seemed to me to be the woman he had idealized in The Patrician, lovely and passive, with the consecrated air that so frequently invites martyrdon. When I looked at John Galsworthy, I reflected that it is a miner tragedy to be born either before or after one's proper time in the world's history. He was one of the most distinguished men, both in appearance and in manner, whom I have ever known; and though he was no longer in his youth, he had the features and the bearing of the lost ages of chivalry. For he belonged, essentially, as his and belonged, to the rapidly disappearing era of the gentleman. Even before the First World War had swept out the gentleman, as an institution, and had swept in "the tough guy," as an authority, tle foundations of the moral order were beginning to crumble.

Much as I loved *The Country House*, I said to John Galsworth y *The Man of Property* would always remain, for me, his finest novel. Though the whole *Forsyte Saga* came afterwards, I have never changed my opinion; and I am glad I met him in 1914, when I could speak with entire sincerity of my great admiration for his books. The books he wrote during the War, such sentimental romances as *The Saint's Progress* and *Beyond*, appeared to me to be obviously second best. So long as he was faithful to his greatest creation, Soames For syte, he was a superb novelist; but in his later middle age, he allowed

himself to become preoccupied, in a literary sense, with the trivial problems of the young girl. Like his central figure in *The Dark Flower*, he was unable to divorce sex from sentimentality. But I met him before his work had softened and thinned, and I was completely under the spell of *The Man of Property* and *The Country House*. As a man, he seemed to me, that evening, to represent the best example of what English tradition could attain, aristocratic, distinguished, humane, and compassionate.

The next day he sent me an autographed copy of *The Country House* and a copy, too, of Hudson's *The Purple Land*, which he extravagantly overestimated....

When we told the Galsworthys that the Arnold Bennetts had asked us to tea the next afternoon, Mrs. Galsworthy remarked in her pensive voice, "I wonder what you will think of him." She added that she liked and admired him, and so did John, though there were persons who considered him—I cannot recall her exact expression, but it meant, in English idiom, "a bit of a bounder." There was little doubt, I felt, of my liking the man who had written The Old Wives' Tale, which I still regard as one of the very greatest of English novels. Yet every other book by Arnold Bennett seems to me to be as dull and thick in texture as the novels of H. G. Wells.

So the following afternoon we were prepared to find that we both liked and enjoyed Arnold Bennett, and that we were agreeably diverted by his handsome, dominant, and very French wife, whom he called Marguerite. As a person, apart from his work, I found him curiously interesting; but it did occur to me that the hypercritical might consider him—well, just "a bit of a bounder." Yet, notwithstanding the controlled stutter in his speech, I could have talked with him interminably, because of the scintillating audacity of his wit. When I told him I ranked The Old Wives' Tale among the six greatest English novels, he promptly rejoined, "Now, let's decide on the other five!" As our choice of the other five proved to be in agreement, he began to show an increasing appreciation of my compliment; the next morning I received a copy of The Old Wives' Tale, with an unusually charming inscription. He basked, as most of us do, in admiration; and because of

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my personal feeling for that one book, he exerted himself to be brilliant and sympathetic, and to be tactful, after the usual English manner, when I did not hear. But I felt with him, as I felt with every other British author I have ever met, with the possible exception of Joseph Conrad, who was not British, that he was trying to overcome an inherent condescension toward all things American, and, especially, toward American letters. I have never met a British writer who had ever really read American literature. One and all, they appeared to regard our prose or poetry as of a single piece. Wherever we went that summer, my friend Louise Collier Willcox, a brilliant woman who wrote able criticism, was addressed, respectfully, as "Ella Wheeler Wilcox." "If only," Louise wailed at last, in desperation, "I might enjoy Ella Wheeler's international reputation, without being held responsible for her verse!"

It is true, of course, that the pre-war English novels were superior to American novels; but, then, the English had had an immeasurably longer time in which to improve the pattern and build up a tradition. What annoyed me, however, was the calm assumption that America was there, chiefly, as a clearing-house for British mediocrity. A just preference for the greater English authors, I could understand perfectly, because I shared it. But I have always resented (though resented is, perhaps, too strong a word) the ease with which English men of letters have passed over to us any inferior novelist who was unable to make a living within the boundaries of Great Britain and her Colonies. During my stay in London a farsighted poet had confided to me that he had declined to write a preface for the uniform American edition of a British novelist who did rotten work, but was such a worthy character that he had to be looked after. "Of course, anything goes in America if you send it over with the right introduction," he observed shrewdly, "but it will be a sad day when you cease to act the fairy godmother over the water."

"It will be a sad day indeed for somebody," I assented.

In the early summer of 1914 we had not turned our friends into creditors by becoming the world's pawnbroker. True, the British might condescend, but that was more an international habit than a point of offense. Louise and I went here, there, and everywhere

in England, and we liked all that we saw. She had grown up in England, and her brother, Price Collier, had left many devoted friends in London. Henry James, for one, spoke of him with deep affection. For, among authors great and small, we met Henry James, now and then, in the best houses. My dear old friend, and the friend of all the world, Mrs. W. K. Clifford, introduced usor so I recall. Through her we received invitations to a reception given by the Ranee of Sarawak, and the three of us went together. To our great delight, we met Henry James almost as soon as we arrived, and the ever kind Mrs. Clifford drifted off, and left us to talk with him. Whenever we happened to meet him, he was, invariably, imposing, urbane, and delightful; but it was a dubious pleasure to have him begin one of his hesitating, polysyllabic, and endlessly discursive soliloquies. Unfortunately, we saw him only in crowds, and we were always pushed on and swept away by gathering streams of people, before he had found the exact right beginning, middle, and end of the involved sentences he was laboring to utter. He was, I felt, a kindly soul, but, even in those too brief meetings and too sudden partings, I felt also that there was a hollow ring somewhere. In looking back, I recall that I had seen him only in the houses of my wealthiest or my most important acquaintances. He had, I suspected, little use for the lowly; and when one industriously sifted his moral problems, there was little left but the smooth sands of decorum. Amiable as he was, he seemed to me (and this may have been entirely my fault) less real in substance than the great English novelists. Placed beside Hardy or Conrad, Henry James would have appeared, in spite of his size and his dignity, slightly foppish in manner. Some years later, when his letters were published, I searched in vain for an intimate note addressed either to the obscure in station or to the impecunious in circumstances. Nevertheless, he was a great artist; and I have no doubt that, at heart, stripped of his punctilios, he was a simple man. We were grateful for the pleasant words and pauses he wasted upon us.

Our opportunities for observation were unlimited that summer. My brother and my sister-in-law had lived for many years in London, and they had made hosts of friends. Their charming house in Berkeley Square was gay and bright with window-boxes in London before the First World War! In June 1914, Mayfair was a place of abundant bloom and fragrance. Mr. Walter H. Page had been one of my close friends ever since he had discovered *The Descendant*, and he and Mrs. Page made a homelike atmosphere in the Embassy in Grosvenor Square. We dined there frequently, and met many British and American authors. I have not forgotten an amusing lunch with lovely Mrs. Stillman, no longer young, but still a veiled Pre-Raphaelite beauty. "Oh, do come again," she said, when we left. "We love to have Americans. They make such a cheerful noise in the house."

As I look back, it appears incredible to me that we should have heard no rumor or prophecy of war with Germany. Everywhere we went, people were talking, anxiously, of a possible uprising in Ulster. Ireland held the attention of the British Empire, and there was such bitterness on both sides of that forgotten dispute. Though I talked with hundreds of well-informed men and women, not one of them alluded to the threatening war cloud over Europe.

We sailed for America the first of July—or it may have been toward the end of June. I cannot recall the date, but I remember that our boat was the German *Imperator*, and that our western voyage was unusually pleasant. Colonel Roosevelt was returning, as I recall, from his last African trip. The Walter Pages had asked him to look out for me, and a day or two after we sailed, he invited us to tea in "the imperial suite" which he occupied. "You must not think this magnificence is owing either to my affluence or to my merits," he remarked gaily. "The Hamburg-American line is still dazzled by the past glories of the Presidency."

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I had not met him until this crossing, and though I was prepared for the vital charm of his manner, I had not expected his intuitive and unfailing tact. Never once, on the several occasions when I was with him, did he forget, even when he was speaking to another person, to turn slightly in my direction, or to place his voice at exactly the right pitch, neither too high nor too low. It was agreeable, of course, to find that he had read my books, and could discuss them convincingly; yet it was to his human magnetism, not to his dubious literary insight, that I surrendered. I had not wished to like him, for my particular abhorrence is the roving barbarian

of the West who goes to Africa to kill animals. Had anyone told me I could ever really enjoy and like "a big game hunter," I should have laughed at the ignoble charge. Nevertheless, in spite of his savage methods with his lesser brethren of the plains and hills, I did like Colonel Roosevelt. What he needed, perhaps, to make him a great human being, as well as a great leader of men, was simply not to have been born a Roosevelt—or, failing this, another incarnation or two in some less fortunate lot. . . .

The nineteen twenties were rootless years in American literature. They began well, those years, with an earnest revolt from parochial smugness and village mores. But it was not long before the rebellion broke away, also, from reason, broke into a desultory guerilla uprising of the primitive, and into a final tremendous assault upon the intellect, along the popular front. The war had been the great liberator of instinct, and by the time the war was over, the new prophets of Freudian psychology were crying aloud to the multitude. All the bold young men, from the Middle West, were learning about America on Paris boulevards; and Bergson's theory of the élan vital, evolved, rather than formulated, in the early years of the century, was now filtering down into the lives of people who had never heard of Bergson, or indeed of any wiser philosophers. Sensation was so effortless, so unbridled, so direct in motive, and so democratic in method. Intellect, on the contrary, was a difficult master. Sensation was a lavish gift at birth, while only the minority, at any age, were endowed with the faculty of intellect. Moreover, it was flattering to discover that everybody possessed philosophy without knowing it. Monsieur Jourdain had become, overnight, the pattern of an age. The intellect, with its record of long service and of rigid systems, was condemned even by its former disciples. Sitting on the boulevards, the young men from the Middle West looked beyond the honest realism of Main Street and of Babbitt into the distorting mirror of America seen from

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abroad. One need not make an effort; one need not apply one's mind to a problem. Novelists and critics alike were tumbling, head foremost, into the soft modern theories. Nothing, any longer, was complicated. Everything was made easy, and intuition was sounder than reason. Acceleration, the mania of the period, set the pace of the movement. The more shallow and formless and flimsy a book appeared, the more certainly it would prove to be a work of effortless genius, predestined to reach a vast audience, which also was effortless. There was a wide rebellion against sentiment, but not against a sentimentality, so long at least as its object was estranged from standard rules of behavior. Gamblers in liquor and nymphomaniacs in green hats met and mingled and hilariously populated whole areas of American fiction. The cult of the hairy ape and the "mucker pose" came later, in the nineteen thirties, when the most casual reader of murder mysteries could infallibly detect the villain, as soon as there entered a character who had recently washed his neck and did not commit mayhem on the English language. The attraction of horror is a mental, or even an intellectual, excitement, but the fascination of the repulsive, so noticeable in contemporary writing, can spring only from some rotted substance within our civilization....

Yet what a relief for tired minds! What a comfortable breaking down of invisible barriers! Sensation alone was enough. In sensation there is movement, speed, action, while reason, like Rodin's thinker, is confined, eternally, in an attitude of repose. . . .

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When this book is published, if that ever happens, the name of Freud may have been long, or perhaps latterly, discredited. One thing we may be sure the time element will exact of the future, and that is an ultimate penalty for unbalanced fame. It may be that dreary Behaviorism will have triumphed. It may be that some newer prophet will have refuted all the present high-sounding theories. Nevertheless it is true that the novel, as a living force, if not as a work of art, owes an incalculable debt to what we call, mistakenly, the new psychology, to Freud, in his earlier interpretations, and more truly, I think, to Jung. These men are to be judged by their own work, not by the excesses of a secondary influence. For my part, though I was never a disciple, I was among the first,

in the South, to perceive the invigorating effect of this fresh approach to experience. That the recoil went too far does not dishonor its leaders, for it is a law of our nature that every dynamic recoil should spring too far backward. Moderation has never yet engineered an explosion, and it requires an explosion to overturn a mountain of prejudice. Meanwhile, what had once been the profession of letters became, overnight, the practice of journalism. . . . And still I waited. . . .

My mind was thronging with ideas. My imagination was more vital and urgent than it had ever been. I felt that a tombstone had been lifted; but, even while I felt this, I knew that my health was lost, and forever. I had never been strong, except in will, and I knew that many of the past twenty years, though not all of them, had been wasted. Yet, in spite of the physical odds against me, I had begun to write my best books in the middle of the nineteen twenties. After Barren Ground, which I had gathered up, as a rich harvest, from the whole of my life, I had written and published two comedies of manners: The Romantic Comedians (surely, as many critics have said, a flawless work of its kind) and They Stooped to Folly. In the early nineteen thirties, I wrote The Sheltered Life and Vein of Iron. As a whole, these five novels represent, I feel, not only the best that was in me, but some of the best work that has been done in American fiction.

Although the primitive in art may be both interesting and impressive, as portrayed in American fiction it is conspicuous for dullness alone. Drab persons living drab lives, observed by drab minds and reported in drab writing—what other impression will be left in the memory? "An undistinguished victory," a critic, writing in 1935, has called this rising tide of uniformity. And he continues: "The outstanding characteristics of this literature seem to be that it deals only with the most ordinary people and things, and that it speaks a language scrupulously devoid of distinction. Because it is

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worded as the street talk of the uneducated it has a novel flavor, and because it is sordid it holds a gloomy fascination. Also, in its implication that nothing can be special or splendid, it is as depressing as the grave. . . . No critic would dare to be harsh with it, for it may be the literature of tomorrow. That makes it even more depressing."

Not that it matters. As long as one hated dullness and refused to be drab either in fact or in fiction, one might cast one's lot with a small but gallant band of irreconcilables. Mediocrity would always win by force of numbers, but it would win only more mediocrity. And this, also, would pass. Pollyanna and proletarian—were both protesting merely "the right of the ordinary to occupy the spotlight"? Yet, depressing or otherwise, we may make, even in the nineteen thirties, another choice. In the midst of a colorless flood there are lighthouses. Virginia Woolf and Santayana are still writing—and there are others. Within the present decade, perhaps within the present year, which is 1937, the greenness of the moron may become as little sought after as the ripeness of the wise. . . .

An unsentimental republic might have discovered the moron, as it discovered sex, with more understanding and less romance. But America has enjoyed the doubtful blessing of a single-track mind. We are able to accommodate, at a time, only one national hero; and we demand that that hero shall be uniform and invincible. As a literate people we are preoccupied, neither with the race nor the individual, but with the type. Yesterday, we romanticized the "tough guy"; today, we are romanticizing the under-privileged, tough or tender; tomorrow, we shall begin to romanticize the pure primitive.

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The result of this tendency has been, of course, the general softening and weakening of our national fibre. One may share the generous wish that all mankind should inherit the world's beauty, without consenting to destroy that beauty because it is beyond the reach and the taste alike of the vast majority. For beauty, like ecstasy, has always been hostile to the commonplace. And the commonplace, under its popular label of the normal, has been the supreme authority for Homo sapiens since the days when he was probably arboreal.

### Penny-Wise

#### ROSE BURGUNDER

Slow morning, when winterluck's Fallen, say (my grave-fine featherer): Tarred the way

When I have sung from me willow and wing Flung and stung from me fiddle of doves
Earth sorrow may shudder me, worn, on her string Tarnish, tranquil me dry in her gloves
Till down be my sounder day

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Yet charm
To the coppery autumnnight gale
Swung high at the starwasting tidewhite sail
Let me shine with my loves.

② ROSE BURGUNDER attended Wellesley College and later worked in the department of English of The Johns Hopkins University. This is among her first published poems.

## Conservation Is Not Enough

#### JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Moralists often blame races and nations because they have never learned how to live and let live. In our time we seem to have been increasingly aware of how persistently and brutally they undertake to eliminate one another. But it is not only the members of his own kind that man seems to want to push off the earth. When he moves in, nearly everything else that lives suffers from his intrusion—sometimes because he wants the space it occupies and the food it eats, but often simply because when he sees a creature not of his kind or a man not of his race, his first impulse is "Kill it."

Even in the desert, where space is cheaper than in most places, the wild life grows scarcer and more secretive as the human population grows. The coyote howls farther and farther away. To almost everything except man, the smell of humanity is the most repulsive of all odors, the sight of man the most terrifying of all sights. Biologists call some animals *cryptozoic*, that is to say, "leading hidden lives." As the human population increases, most animals develop cryptozoic habits; the deer is a good example of this development. Even now there are more wild animals around than we realize. They see us when we do not see them; and it is because they have seen us that we do not see them. Albert Schweitzer remarks somewhere that we owe kindness even to an insect, when we can afford to show it, just because we ought to do something to make up for all the cruelties, necessary as well as unnecessary, which we have inflicted upon almost the whole of animate creation.

Probably not one man in ten is capable of understanding such moral and aesthetic considerations, much less of permitting his conduct to be guided by them. But perhaps twice as many, though

<sup>©</sup> JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH, formerly Brander Matthews Professor of Dramatic Literature at Columbia University, is now living in Tucson, Arizona, where he devotes himself entirely to writing. His most recent publication is *The Measure of Man*.

still far from a majority, are beginning to realize that the reckless devastation of the earth has practical consequences. They are beginning to hear at least about "conservation," even though they are not even dimly aware of any connection between it and a large morality and are very unlikely to suppose that it does or could mean anything more than looking after their own welfare.

Hardly more than two generations ago, Americans first woke up to the fact that their land was not inexhaustible. Every year since then, more and more has been said, and at least a little more has been done, about "conserving resources," about "rational use," and about such reconstruction as seemed possible. Scientists have studied the problem, public works have been undertaken, laws passed. Yet everybody knows that the using up still goes on, perhaps not so fast nor so recklessly as once it did, but still at a steady pace. And there is nowhere that it goes on more nakedly, more persistently, or with a fuller realization of what is happening than in the desert regions where the margin to be used up is narrower.

First, more and more cattle were set to grazing and overgrazing land from which the scanty rainfall now ran off even more rapidly than before. Then more outrageously, large areas of desert shrub were uprooted to plant cotton and other crops which were watered by wells tapping underground pools of water, now demonstrably shrinking fast because they represent years of accumulation which can be exhausted even more rapidly than an oil well. Everyone knows that this water supply will give out before long—very soon, in fact, if the number of wells which draw on it continues to increase as it has been increasing. Soon dust bowls will be where was once a sparse but healthy desert; and man, having uprooted, slaughtered, or driven away everything which lived healthily and normally there, will himself either abandon the country or die.

To the question of why men will do or are permitted to do such things, there are many replies. Some speak of population pressures, while others more bluntly discuss unconquerable human greed. Some despair; some hope that more education and more public works will, in the long run, prove effective. But is there, perhaps, something more, something different, which is indispensable? Is there some missing link in the chain of education, law and public

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works? Is there something lacking without which none of these is sufficient?

After a lifetime spent in forestry, wild-life management and conservation of one kind or another, after such a lifetime during which he nevertheless saw his country slip two steps backward for every one it took forward, the late Aldo Leopold pondered the question and came up with an unusual answer which many people would dismiss as "sentimental" and be surprised to hear from a "practical" scientific man. He published his article originally in the Journal of Forestry, but it was reprinted in the posthumous volume A Sand County Almanac, where it was given a seemingly neutral but actually very significant title, "The Land Ethic."

This is a subtle and original essay, full of ideas never so clearly expressed before, and seminal in the sense that each might easily grow into a separate treatise. Yet the conclusion reached can be simply stated. Something is lacking; and because of that lack, education, law and public works fail to accomplish what they hope to accomplish. Without it, the high-minded impulse to educate, to legislate and to manage becomes as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And the thing which is missing is love, some feeling for, as well as some understanding of, the inclusive community of rocks and soils, plants and animals, of which we are a part.

It is not, to put Mr. Leopold's thoughts in different words, enough to be enlightenedly selfish in our dealings with the land. That means, of course, that it is not enough for the farmer to want to get the most out of his farm or for the lumberer to get the most out of his forest without considering agriculture and wood production as a whole, both now and in the future. It also means more than that; and enlightened selfishness cannot be the occasion of that something else. This is partly because enlightened selfishness cannot possibly be extended to include remote posterity—to children perhaps and to grandchildren possibly, but not much beyond, because the very idea of "self" cannot be stretched much further, and some purely ethical considerations must operate if anything does. And even that is not all. The wisest, the most enlightened, the most remotely long-seeing exploitation of resources is not enough,

for the simple reason that the whole concept of exploitation is so false and so limited that in the end it will defeat itself and the earth will have been plundered, no matter how scientifically and farseeingly the plundering has been done.

To live healthily and successfully on the land, we must also live with it. We must be part not only of the human community, but of the whole community; we must acknowledge some sort of oneness not only with our neighbors, our countrymen and our civilization, but also with the natural as well as the man-made community. Ours is not only "one world" in the sense usually implied by that term; it is also "one earth." And without some acknowledgment of that fact, men can no more live successfully than they can if they refuse to admit the political and economic interdependency of the various sections of the civilized world. It is not a sentimental but a grimly literal fact that unless we share this terrestrial globe with creatures other than ourselves, we shall not be able to live on it for long.

You may, if you like, think of this as a moral law. But if you are skeptical about moral laws, you cannot escape the fact that this has its factual, scientific aspect which the science of ecology is every day making clearer as it demonstrates those more and more remote interdependences which, no matter how remote they are, are crucial even for us.

Before even the most obvious aspects of the balance of nature had been recognized, a greedy, self-centered mankind naively divided plants into the useful and the useless. In the same way it divided animals into those which were either "domestic" on the one hand or "game" on the other, and those which were called "vermin" and ought to be destroyed. That was the day when extermination of whole species was taken as a matter of course and random introductions, which usually proved to be either complete failures or all too successful, were everywhere being made. Pretty soon, however, it became evident enough that to rid the world of vermin and to stock it with nothing but useful organisms was at least not a simple task if you assume that "useful" means simply "immediately useful to man."

Even to this day the ideal nevertheless remains the same for

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most people. They may know, or at least they may have been told, that what looks like the useless is often remotely but demonstrably essential. Out in this desert country they may see the land being rendered useless by overuse. They may have heard that when the mountain lion is killed off, the deer multiply; that when the deer multiply, the new growth of trees and shrubs is eaten away; and that when the hills are denuded, a farm or a section of grazing land many miles away is washed into gullies and made incapable of supporting either man or any other of the large animals. They may even have heard how the wonderful new insecticides proved so effective that fish and birds died of starvation; that on at least one Pacific island, insects had to be reintroduced to pollinate the crops; that when you almost completely kill off a destructive pest, you run the risk of starving out everything which preys upon it and thus run the risk that the pest itself will stage an overwhelming comeback because its natural enemies are no more. Yet, knowing all this and much more, their dream is still the dream that an earth for the use of man alone can be created if only we learn more and scheme more effectively. They still hope that nature's scheme of checks and balances, which provides for a varied population, in which she stubbornly refuses to scheme only from man's point of view and cherishes the weeds and vermin as persistently as she cherishes him, can be replaced by a scheme of his own devising. Ultimately he hopes he can beat the game. But the more the ecologist learns, the less likely it seems that man can in the long run do anything of the sort.

"Nature's social union" is not the purely gentle thing which Burns imagined. In fact it is a balance, with all the stress and conflict which the word implies, and not a "social union" at all. But it is, nevertheless, a workable, seesawing balance. And when it ceases to seesaw, there is trouble ahead for whatever is on the end that stays up.

For every creature there is a paradox at the heart of the necessary "struggle for existence" and the paradox is simply this: Neither man nor any other animal can afford to triumph in that struggle too completely. Unconditional surrender is a self-defeating formula—even in the war against insect pests. In nature as elsewhere, "to the victor belong the spoils"—but for a time only. When there are no

more spoils to be consumed, the victor dies. That is believed by some to be what happened to the dominant carnivorous dinosaurs many millions of years ago. They became too dominant, and presently there was nothing left to dominate—or to eat. It is certainly what happens to other creatures like the too-protected deer who multiply so successfully that their herds can no longer be fed; or, more spectacularly, like the lemmings who head desperately toward a new area to be exploited and end in the cold waters of a northern sea because the new area does not exist.

What is commonly called "conservation" will not work in the long run, because it is not really conservation at all but rather, disguised by its elaborate scheming, a more knowledgeable variation of the old idea of a world for man's use only. That idea is unrealizable. But how can man be persuaded to cherish any other ideal unless he can learn to take some interest and some delight in the beauty and variety of the world for its own sake, unless he can see a "value" in a flower blooming or an animal at play, unless he can see some "use" in things not useful?

In our society we pride ourselves upon having reached a point where we condemn an individual whose whole aim in life is to acquire material wealth for himself. But his vulgarity is only one step removed from that of a society which takes no thought for anything except increasing the material wealth of the community. In his usual extravagant way, Thoreau once said: "This curious world which we inhabit is more wonderful than it is convenient; more beautiful than it is useful; it is more to be admired than it is to be used." Perhaps that "more" is beyond what most people could or perhaps ought to be convinced of. But without some realization that "this curious world" is at least beautiful as well as useful, conservation is doomed. We must live for something besides making a living. If we do not permit the earth to produce beauty and joy, it will in the end not produce food either.

Here practical considerations and those which are commonly called "moral," "aesthetic" and even "sentimental" join hands. Yet even the enlightened Department of Agriculture is so far from being fully enlightened that it encourages the farmer to forget that

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his land can ever produce anything except crops and is fanatical to the point of advising him how to build fences so that a field may be plowed to the last inch without leaving even a narrow margin within which one of the wild flowers—many of which agriculture has nearly rendered extinct—may continue to remind him that the world is beautiful as well as useful. And that brings us around to another of Aldo Leopold's seminal ideas:

Conservation still proceeds at a snail's pace; ... the usual answer ... is "more conservation".... But is it certain that only the *volume* of education needs stepping up? Is something lacking in *content* as well?... It is inconceivable to me that an ethical relation to land can exist without love, respect and admiration for land, and a high regard for its value. By value, I of course mean something far broader than mere economic value; I mean value in the philosophical sense.

Here in the West, as in the country at large, a war more or less concealed under the guise of a "conflict of interest" rages between the "practical" conservationist and the defenders of national parks, between cattlemen and lumberers on the one hand and "sentimentalists" on the other. The pressure to allow the hunter, the rancher or the woodcutter to invade the public domain is constant, and the plea is always that we should "use" what is assumed to be useless unless it is adding to material welfare. But unless somebody teaches love, there can be no ultimate protection to what is lusted after.

Any fully matured science of ecology will have to grapple with the fact that man, from the ecological point of view, is one of those animals which are in danger from a too successful participation in the struggle for existence. He has upset the balance of nature to a point where he has exterminated hundreds of other animals and has exhausted soils. Part of this he calls a demonstration of his intelligence and of the success which results from his use of it. Because of that intelligence he has learned how to exploit resources very thoroughly, and he is even beginning to learn how to redress the balance in certain minor ways. But he cannot keep indefinitely one step ahead of overcrowding and starvation; and from the standpoint of nature as a whole, he is both a threat to every other living thing

and, therefore, a threat to himself also. If he were not so extravagantly successful, it would be better for nearly everything except man, and therefore possibly better in the longest run for him also. He has become the tyrant of the earth, the waster of its resources, the creator of the most prodigious imbalance in the natural order which has ever existed.

From a purely homocentric point of view, this may seem entirely proper. To most people it undoubtedly does. Is it not our proudest boast that we have learned how to "control nature"? Does not our dream of the future include a final emancipation from any dependence upon a natural balance and the substitution for it of some balance established by ourselves and in our exclusive interest? Is not that, in fact, what most people have in mind when they think of the final triumph of humanity?

Most would also go one step further and claim that we have every reason in experience to believe that this final triumph is possible. Has not all civilization been a closer and closer approach to it? Is not, indeed, the closeness of the approach the very measure of the degree of civilization? And if it is, then how can anyone even hint at the desirability of calling a halt? Could any halt possibly be called which would not be the beginning of a retreat back to the primitive?

Yet the fact remains that to all things there is a limit, that "progress" cannot continue indefinitely in one straight line. The growth of cities was, for instance, certainly essential to the development of civilization; but does that necessarily mean that cities should get greater and greater—that the bigger the city, the higher the civilization which it makes possible? Many would agree that it does not. Some might go on to suggest that the "control of nature" is itself something to which there are limits, that the control can never be absolute, that nature allows us only a certain length of rope, that in the long run it will appear that no complete emancipation from her rule is possible, that man's ability to "control nature" is something to which limits are set. If he insists upon trying to go beyond those limits, nature will have the last word.

The more completely we bring nature "under control," the more complicated our methods must become, the more disastrous

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the chain reaction set up by any failure of wisdom or watchfulness or technique. We are required to know more and more, and we are always threatened by the impossibility of achieving adequate knowledge, much less adequate wisdom and virtue.

Every increase in the complexity of organization has made the situation more precarious at the same time that it has increased our comfort, our wealth and our short-term safety. Until we learned to support a population far larger than we would have believed possible a century ago, there was no danger of general starvation, however disastrous and common local famines might have been. Although Malthus was certainly wrong in his estimates, it is by no means certain that he was wrong in his general principle. Until we increased the wealth of nations by linking them one with another, we were not exposed to the danger of a world-wide economic collapse. Until we learned how to "control" the atom, there was no danger that atomic phenomena would actually get out of control, and hence it is still not clear whether we are running the machines or the machines are running us. Thus we now have three tigers by the tail—the economic, the physical and the biological; and three tigers are three times as dangerous as one. We cannot let any of them go. But it is not certain that we can hang on to all of them indefinitely. Many a despot has discovered that it was just when his power seemed to have been made absolute that the revolution broke out. And it may be that just about three hundred years were necessary to expose the fallacy of the ideal born during the seventeenth century. Perhaps nature cannot really be controlled after all.

If one is prepared to admit that there is a limit to the extent to which we can exercise a biological control exclusively in our own interest, then it is certainly worth-while to ask how we might know when we are approaching that limit. It would, of course, be too easy to reply simply, "When man and society are obviously sick." Too many other explanations of the sickness can be given, and each can be made to seem more or less convincing; indeed, several of them may each be partially correct. But there is a criterion which it seems to me not wholly fanciful to apply. Might it not have something to do with nature's own great principle of "live and let live"?

Might it not be that man's success as an organism is genuinely a success so long, but only so long, as it does not threaten the extinction of everything not useful to and absolutely controlled by him, so long as that success is not incompatible with the success of nature as the varied and free thing which she is, so long as, to some extent, man is prepared to share the earth with others?

And if by any chance that criterion is valid, then either one of two things is likely to happen. Either outraged nature will violently reassert herself and some catastrophe, perhaps the catastrophe brought about when more men are trying to live in our limited space than even their most advanced technology can make possible, will demonstrate the hollowness of man's supposed success; or man himself will learn in time to set a reasonable limit to his ambitions and accept the necessity of recognizing his position as that of the most highly evolved of living creatures, but not one which entitles him to assume that no others have a right to live unless they contribute directly to his material welfare.

But how can he learn to accept such a situation, to believe that it is right and proper, when the whole tendency of his thought and his interest carries him in a contrary direction? How can he learn to value and delight in a natural order larger than his own order? How can he come to accept, not sullenly but gladly, the necessity of sharing the earth?

As long ago as the seventeenth century—as long ago, that is, as the very time when the ambition to "control nature" in any large way was first coming to be formulated and embraced—a sort of answer to these questions was being given in theological terms. John Ray, one of the first great English biologists, formulated them in a book which was read for a hundred years; and they cut two ways, because what Ray had to say was directed against the egotism of man as expressed both by the old-fashioned theologians who thought that everything had been *made* for man's use and by the Baconians who assumed that he could at least *turn it* to that use.

"It is," Ray wrote, "a general received opinion, that all this visible world was created for Man; that Man is the End of Creation; as if there were no other end of any creature, but some way or other to be serviceable to man. . . . But though this be vulgarly received,

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yet wise men now-a-days think otherwise. Dr. Moore affirms, That creatures are made to enjoy themselves as well as to serve us." The greatest profit which we can get from the observation and study of other living things is, he went on to say, often not that we learn how to use them but that we may contemplate through them the wonders and the beauties of God's creation. What Ray was saying is precisely what Thoreau was restating in secularized form when he insisted that "this curious world which we inhabit . . . is more to be admired and enjoyed than it is to be used."

Since our age is not inclined to be interested in theological arguments, it is not likely to find Ray's exposition a sufficient reason for accepting gladly the continued existence on this earth of "useless" plants and animals occupying space which man might turn to his own immediate profit. He is more likely to make at least certain concessions in that direction as the result of absorbing what the ecologist has to say about the impossibility of maintaining a workable balance without a much more generous view of what is "useful" and what is not. But it is not certain that on that basis he will ever make quite enough concessions, and it is entirely certain that he will not make them happily, will not find life pleasanter just because he makes them, unless he can learn to love and to delight in the variety of nature.

# In Praise of Diversity

# PHYLLIS McGINLEY

Since this ingenious earth began
To shape itself from fire and rubble;
Since God invented man, and man
At once fell to, inventing trouble,
One virtue, one subversive grace
Has chiefly vexed the human race.

One whimsical beatitude,
Concocted for his gain and glory,
Has man most stoutly misconstrued
Of all the primal category—
Counting no blessing, but a flaw,
That Difference is the mortal law.

Adam, perhaps, while toiling late,
With life a book still strange to read in,
Saw his new world, how variegate,
And mourned, "It was not so in Eden,"
Confusing thus from the beginning
Unlikeness with original sinning.

And still the sons of Adam's clay
Labor in person or by proxy
At altering to a common way
The planet's holy heterodoxy.
Till now, so dogged is the breed,
Almost it seems that they succeed.

One shrill, monotonous, level note
The human orchestra's reduced to.
Man casts his ballot, turns his coat,
Gets born, gets buried as he used to,
Makes war, makes love—but with a kind
Of masked and universal mind.

His good has no nuances. He
Doubts or believes with total passion.
Heretics choose for heresy
Whatever's the prevailing fashion.
Those wearing Tolerance for a label
Call other views intolerable.

"For or Against" 's the only rule.

Damned are the unconvinced, the floaters.

Now all must go to public school,

March with the League of Women Voters

Or else for safety get allied

With a unanimous Other Side.

There's white, there's black; no tint between.
Truth is a plane that was a prism.
All's Blanshard that's not Bishop Sheen.
All's treason that's not patriotism.
Faith, charity, hope—now all must fit
One pattern or its opposite.

Or so it seems. Yet who would dare
Deny that nature planned it other
When every freckled thrush can wear
A dapple various from his brother,
When each pale snowflake in the storm
Is false to some imagined norm?

Recalling then what surely was
The earliest bounty of Creation:
That not a blade among the grass
But flaunts its difference with elation,
Let us devoutly take no blame
If similar does not mean the same.

And grateful for the wit to see
Prospects through doors we cannot enter,
Ah! let us praise Diversity
Which holds the world upon its center.
Praise con amour or furioso
The large, the little and the soso.

Rejoice that under cloud and star
The planet's more than Maine or Texas.
Bless the delightful fact there are
Twelve months, nine muses, and two sexes,
And infinite in earth's dominions
Arts, climates, wonders and opinions.

Praise ice and ember, sand and rock,
Tiger and dove and ends and sources;
Space travellers, and who only walk
Like mailmen round familiar courses;
Praise vintage grapes and tavern Grappas,
And bankers and Phi Beta Kappas;

Each in its moment justified,
Praise knowledge, theory, second guesses;
That which must wither or abide;
Prim men, and men like wildernesses;
And men of peace and men of mayhem
And pipers and the ones who pay 'em.

Praise the disheveled, praise the sleek;
Austerity and hearts-and-flowers;
People who turn the other cheek
And extroverts who take cold showers;
Saints we can name a holy day for
And infidels whom saints can pray for.

Praise youth for pulling things apart,
Toppling the idols, breaking leases;
Then from the upset apple-cart
Praise oldsters picking up the pieces.
Praise wisdom, hard to be a friend to,
And folly one can condescend to.

Praise what conforms and what is odd,
Remembering, if the weather worsens
Along the way, that even God
Is said to be three separate Persons.
Then upright or upon the knee,
Praise Him that by His courtesy,
For all our prejudice and pains,
Diverse His Creature still remains.

<sup>©</sup> PHYLLIS McGINLEY is best known for her verse, which has appeared in *The New Yorker, Atlantic Monthly, Saturday Review* and a wide variety of other publications. "In Praise of Diversity" was first presented as the Phi Beta Kappa poem for the New York Delta chapter at Columbia University in June of 1953.

# Rembrandt: Educator of Humanity

# PAUL LEROY

PERHAPS NO PAINTING HAS A HIGHER PLACE in the history of art than Rembrandt's "The Night Watch." Since it appeared in 1642, and especially in the last hundred years, so much has been written about it that further discussion may be unnecessary. The painting, however, is inexhaustibly rich and will probably give nourishment to thought for a long time. Therefore, I offer these remarks not simply to add to the voluminous literature on the subject, but in the hope that they will meet with critical attention.

When I first saw "The Night Watch" in 1931, it had already been cleaned once. The second cleaning seems to have been more thorough, removing not only the patina which was the work of time, but possibly something which came from the brush of Rembrandt, who seldom painted *alla prima*, but covered one coating of paint with another, painting sometimes almost in relief.

The commentators have scoured the painting as much as the restorers, the result being an enormous literature of experts in which many riddles are presented, but no solutions offered. The experts, and not the least important among them, have been disturbed principally by what they consider the inexplicable contradiction between the powerful sweep of the lively figures and the sober, prosaic subject: an outing of the city militia. "There dominates in the whole painting an uncommonly great movement, confusion and haste; certainly the Spartans of Leonidas did not go off to Thermopylae with more storm than these worthy citizens of Amsterdam left for target practice." Wilhelm Bode, the great connoisseur of art, said: "The choice and rendering of the theme goes beyond the subject of the picture [the representation of the Amsterdam militia] and thereby depreciates them... The fabulous

② PAUL LEROY, architect, writer and painter, was born in Berlin and has lived in Paris since 1933. These comments on Rembrandt are taken from Mr. Leroy's unpublished memoirs, The Topography of My Life.

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light and the extraordinary animation are so captivating that one believes oneself to be a witness to a world historical event." Further on, Bode adds: "'The Night Watch' appears to be the representation of a great moment in history. . . . The subject is not important enough for such dramatic treatment; in consequence, the painting takes on a somewhat theatrical effect." Here we have the learning of the learned, the learned who cannot see the forest for the trees and who "appreciate the sound of their own voices more than the singing of the angels."

If one were to follow this line of thought, one would have to conclude that, as always when doing a portrait, the painter took a good look at his commissioners, and injected them with some of his own artistic inspiration which then flowered out in color under his brush.

However, it is because a profound idea underlies and dominates the details of the subject that this representation of valiant citizens was elevated to so dramatic a pitch. While looking at the painting I was struck at once by the idea that Rembrandt had presented here nothing other than the notion of patriotism—with a realism that ignores the conventional ideas on the subject. This was of course not done deliberately. Many times before, artists had used military themes, producing good, simple work. Here these materials were penetrated by a deeper spirit, revealing a nobler idea of patriotism of which the artist was probably unconscious at first. What Rembrandt represents here is not the noisy chauvinism of the pretentious, but the healthy and sane activity of an armed community determined to perpetuate itself. The protection of one's own life and property involves the defense of one's family and one's heirs; it reaches out even further to include, first, friends and neighbors; then the home town; and finally those wider ties which destiny has linked with our history and which we call our native land, for this too has always been the ancestral and hereditary property of every citizen. The balanced well-being of the individual is all the more secure, the greater and the wider the base upon which it rests. On old Dutch ducats there appears the symbol of a man with a sheaf of arrows. A single arrow is easily broken, but bound up with others it helps to form a shaft of great resistance.

Only anxious little people can believe that narrow egoism serves their interests; generous, far-seeing men unite themselves to their kind, giving and taking without envy or regret. Clear-sighted generosity serves the interests of all and becomes virtue—in this case, patriotism.

"The Night Watch" is no "theatrical" group representation of fellow-riflemen; it portrays no "world historical event." It is the highest artistic expression of love of country. If we examine the painting in this light, the many unsolved riddles disappear of themselves. The spontaneous animation in which each figure appears as a winged soldier of Leonidas is the first reaction of patriotism, the call from confusion and haste to efficacious order. "This one rushes out half dressed, that one is buttoning his jacket, another is putting on his gloves, still another is loading his gun. Somebody is beating the drum; somebody else is waving the flag." Everybody is doing something, whatever is necessary for the accomplishment of his special role.

In the middle of the picture, high and dark between two light areas, is placed the huge figure of the captain, the elected commanding officer. He advances, while behind him the followers begin to fall in line. His eyes express worry; but it seems as though already he espies, as from a distance, an element of stability in the tumult of the situation. Although absorbed in the thought of more remote things, he speaks to his lieutenant of matters closer to hand.

The lieutenant has ordinarily been considered the principal figure of the painting—so much so that the captain has been said to be, from an artistic point of view, a simple contrasting figure. The lieutenant "radiates a strong and blinding light, such as hits the eye when one looks at the sun. He is of a plastic corporeality which has perhaps never been equaled in the whole history of painting—a unique artistic figure."

Let us take a look at this short man, who grips his halberd with more caution than combativeness, clasping it at its most delicate spot, there where the threatening blade is attached to the wooden shaft. An Italian, the biographer of Bernini, remarked that "this weapon, which is only half an arm's length, is foreshortened in such a way that it appears to be of natural size from

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every angle." Why Rembrandt made this, as Luebke said, "stunted figure of the lieutenant with such virtuosity and emphasis that he should become the most impressive figure in the picture" remains a riddle for the art scholars who seek to explain it exclusively in terms of color composition.

If, however, one regards the bold step of the little man and his eyes turned toward the captain with an expression at once critical, intelligent and devoted, one can understand why he occupies the center of the painting. Just as he illuminates the picture artistically, it is through him that its meaning is revealed to us. The lieutenant is the intermediary, transmitting the directing thoughts of the commander-in-chief to his field troops and turning them into action. That Rembrandt placed this efficient middleman between the commander chosen from the elite and the followers coming from the free citizenry, that he made him the pivot, the turning point and the shining center of the picture, setting him in its very axis—all this bespeaks his enlightened and highly liberal view of man, the world and the essential nature of patriotism. That the name of an old folk hero of the Middle Ages, one of the leaders in the fight for the independence of Amsterdam, has been found engraved on the round collar of the lieutenant, adds weight to my thesis.

"The secondary center of light" has posed for Rembrandt's interpreters another riddle which is also much disputed and still unsolved. Here stands a child, a small girl bathed in light. None of the commentators knows exactly what to do with her. One of them speaks of her "lively, excited face"; another, of her "vague, shimmering spirituality, not yet individualized and still immersed in the elements." The French painter Fromentin wrote: "It is hard to know why this child who has neither form nor colour is here pressing between the legs of the riflemen." When director of the Museum of Rotterdam, Schmidt-Degener, pondered over the possibility that the child is the house porter's daughter; former Viennese Gallery director Glück considered her a camp follower; and Professor Neumann of Heidelberg, whose comprehensive book on Rembrandt I appreciate very highly, believes that "we would be faithful to the spirit of Rembrandt if we put an end to this endless

debate over the role of the child, ceased to take her seriously and broke her up into elements of light and colour." One connoisseur who observes and explains the slightest hidden splash of color and who investigates with a magnifying glass every print of an etching if the needle seems to have deviated a little from the original line, explains the figure, which he himself considers dominant, as "a hardly motivated makeshift which the artist just happened to hit upon, because the figure of the child takes so little room."

The necessity of bringing a child into the picture is simply and compellingly explained by the idea of patriotism which implies the care of family and the faith in future generations. Nor does it appear an accident of composition that the standard-bearer lifts his hand with the flag directly over the child's head. If the child were not "pressing between the legs of the riflemen," it would be necessary to invoke the words of Heine: "In museums of natural history the whale is often missing from the fish pond." Later we will discuss another picture where children play as important a role as the child does here.

But let us consider "The Concord of the Land," the allegorical grisaille which exists only in the form of a sketch and which dates from a year before "The Night Watch." Here fighting horsemen, coats of arms and symbolic objects and figures of all sorts are assembled pell-mell in a highly romantic fashion. The scholars are agreed that in a certain sense this painting has a connection with "The Night Watch." Neumann says that the metallic luster of "The Night Watch" was the final fulfillment of the vision which had inspired this fantasy of knights. Schmidt-Degener had the idea that "The Concord of the Land" was the first form in which Rembrandt's imagination dressed the militia of "The Night Watch" in order to avoid the individual portraiture. I assume even more simply that the ideas which had inspired Rembrandt while he was working at "The Concord of the Land," but which had not been fully expressed at that moment, continued to turn in the artist's mind and here, on favorable soil, grew and ripened spontaneously.

The authorities come very close to the explanation adopted here, without however taking the last and decisive step. Personally I explain this less in terms of the problem itself than in terms of

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their profession. Art historians are concerned with such things as dates, historical contexts and influences. This sober study must at times become very flat and even humiliating, considering the greatness of the works which constitute its subject matter. Since even the most faithful and humble of servants sometimes advises and influences his great and moody master, in like fashion the art scholar often turns critic and solicitous teacher. To this end he familiarizes himself with the technique and the processes of art. He comes to believe that he possesses an even more comprehensive and manysided knowledge of art than the artist himself, limited by the indulgence of his personal whims. The scholar finds a happy rest in the sure port of erudition, from which he sallies forth with judgments sanctioned by pleasing sentiments of his own importance. He does not hesitate to use his special vocabulary; and on such questions as color values, complementary colors and the fundamentals of composition, he says things which never so much as entered the mind of the creative artist.

On the other hand, he finds it beneath the dignity of the exact scientist to give himself over to speculations based on fleeting and subjective feelings. This would be unprofessional, a question of fantasy and scribbling which should be left to the outsiders and the dilettantes, as for example, myself. However, from time to time even a blind hen comes across a little kernel.

I have been impressed by an idea which, although not strictly demonstrable, is none the less extremely enticing. Neumann asks if Rembrandt "in his last years delivered himself from the exclusive preoccupation with the sensuous and sought harder after the heart and soul of things, the obsession with rich colours alone remaining." Here Neumann refers us to two of Rembrandt's later works, "The Jewish Bride" in Amsterdam and "The Family Group" in Braunschweig, both of which "derive their entire sensuality from strong colour effects."

This seems to me as confused as all the interpretations that have been given so far of the masterly Amsterdam picture. It shows a deeply thoughtful, bejeweled, almost too gorgeously dressed couple: a young, beautiful woman and a man ripe in age. The expression of each is very complex. The man draws the woman gently to him-

self while the woman gives herself with a slight touch of reserve. He lays his right hand possessively on her heart; her lifted hand, which had probably been raised a moment before in defense, appears now to yield. The manly face expresses pensive solicitude and quiet decision. The breathing quiet of this embrace has the same irresistible intensity as the overpowering glow of the colors "which no words can paint." The scholars are not in agreement as to the proper designation for this couple. In addition to the usual title of "The Jewish Bride," five different ones have been proposed, of which none is convincingly appropriate. It has been debated whether the faces are expressive or not, "whether the two persons stand in a relationship of father and child, man and wife, or whether there is any relationship at all." Neumann believes that the painting is erotic in character. If this be the case, the eroticism is highly sublimated and spiritualized. Leaving aside the question of the proper designation of the couple, be it Biblical or other, it seems to me that this picture is a manifestation of one of the deepest and most spiritual meditations on marriage. It exhausts the subject just as completely as "The Night Watch" exhausts the subject of patriotism.

The poet Georg Hermann, who died a victim of the Nazi deportation program, wrote once that in order to shake off feelings of depression and disgust, he often rode fourth-class from Berlin to Braunschweig, spending his last penny. There, before this wonder of Rembrandt's last period, "The Family Group," he would find comfort and elation. In this picture the upright figure of the father stands in the dark background. Between him and the watchful mother, absorbed in the care of the youngest child who is sitting on her lap, the other bright and healthy children appear, like a living garland. The oldest of the small girls holds a basket by its handles, the youngest seeks for the mother's breast. This family seems, like birds in their nest, to rest comfortably and peacefully in the secure and happy familiarity of family union. The youngsters hold their heads high; the mother tends and feeds her flock; the father looks guardingly around.

Neumann says: "The remarkable thing is that this family painting does not fit in with the other late works of Rembrandt. The

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memory of 'The Night Watch' with the same flowing of colours and near absence of psychological expression springs to mind irresistibly." On this last point at least, Neumann is wrong. One sees the psychological expression of the painting if one interprets it together with "The Jewish Bride" and "The Night Watch" as a representation of the ancient cultural foundations of society: marriage, family and country, the germs from which perhaps one day a larger human community may grow.

Can it be a simple coincidence that it was just in these three paintings that Rembrandt's brush should have kindled the bright flames of his colors? Certainly it was not a calculated intention; the atmosphere and the grandeur of these themes with all their farreaching implications were such as to ignite each spark of this fiery soul and to make it shine like a lighthouse in the distance. Thus does Rembrandt become an educator. He does not urge us to return "to the days of characterless adolescence," of medieval soul-ghettos, of mysticism, of suffocating incense, or of brain-reeling, pseudoscientific nonsense. On the contrary, he inspires us to search with clear-minded foresight for the highest of ideals—personal freedom founded on human co-operation. The glowing light which Rembrandt kindled with his brush was created by a human hand seeking order in chaos, shaping unformed matter and gauging it with the stamp of knowledge.

Rembrandt made sketches in the style of Leonardo and Raphael; he studied and collected prints of the Italian masters, among them even the obscene drawings of Raphael. He accepted orders from Messina for pictures of the Apostles. He borrowed from Renaissance humanism as much as he needed and blended it with his own north-European humanity, rendering thereby his representation of man and the world just and equitable; that is to say, he succeeded in rendering the exterior expression of the innermost sentiments with indulgence and good will. He painted the ostentatious rich and the tattered derelicts of society with an equal love; so also scenes from the New Testament, the Old Testament and from ancient mythology, the saints of the Church and those Jews in whose midst he lived, with whom he was on close terms and whom he painted ceaselessly. Perhaps, as Neumann remarked in passing,

"he saw most easily into this people whose hearts, laid bare by a thousand years of misfortune and suffering, reveal the depth of human nature." Neumann unrolls in his book a lively picture of the contradictory religious currents existing side by side in the Holland of Rembrandt's time, rationalism and mysticism whirled together. Rosicrucians, cabalists, atheists and freethinkers, breathing the spirit of the Italian Renaissance, are all the painter's contemporaries. He himself is supposed to have been—proof is lacking—a Mennonite. However, this sect leaves such an extraordinary freedom to its members that even the unbelievers and the indifferent are able to find an undisturbed asylum in its ranks.

This makes it all the more difficult to understand why Neumann insists upon classing Rembrandt with the "mystically illuminated," why he compares him to the mystic Jacob Boehme and almost goes so far as to suspect him of being an alchemist. Max Weber considers Rembrandt "the greatest Christian apostle in the field of art," and Kolloff endows him with "a touch of Jewry." Baldinucci permits him to deny the divinity of Christ, and Georg Simmel wanted to save the "transcendence of Rembrandt's religious art." The great English painter Reynolds on the other hand is of the opinion that the entire Dutch school's painting appealed only to the sight, being a sort of technical grammar without any deeper meaning. His countryman Ruskin, the pope of the Pre-Raphaelite movement which rounded out the lean figures of the so-called Nazarene school of German-Roman painters with a lustrous and elegant flow of classical curves and colors, goes even further. In his opinion all modern art has been so thoroughly penetrated by a spirit of rationalism as to drive out all religious content. He says that the painting in which Rembrandt holds Saskia on his knee, the uplifted tumbler in his free hand, proves that the ideals of faith and hope had been lost. He thought that an art such as Rembrandt's was necessarily common and godless and that the Dutch were a race of painter-beasts, clever but without any feeling. The Frenchman Fromentin, on the contrary, explains Rembrandt as an "ideologist, a spiritualist and a metaphysician."

A normal eye, unprotected by horn-rimmed glasses, can see beyond this confusion of opinions: Rembrandt, who was one of

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the world's greatest geniuses in the field of art, could not have been imprisoned in a narrow world of ideas. His great personality cannot be judged in terms of ready-made descriptive labels. Rembrandt is his own measure. Spiritual freedom and clear-sightedness raise him beyond these diverse religious attitudes which all lead finally to some form or another of mysticism. It is perfectly clear that mysticism was completely foreign to his nature, especially if one studies the self-portraits in which every phase of his life is recorded. The last in the Carstanjen collection is particularly revealing. The man who can look at himself and paint his own portrait in such a fashion has not fallen into metaphysical irrationalism. He is a critical realist and also a friend of man, tolerant toward every race and religion, from which he takes what he needs for the life of his art. He is beyond clericalism and sectarian prejudices. He is quite simply a free man, a model, an educator. Of course, this or a similar interpretation means nothing at all to the priestly caste of aestheticians who take Rembrandt for an oracle and hide him in clouds of damp and sulfurous twaddle. Rembrandt, who wore and painted the most costly and magnificent costumes, is said to belong to the Mennonites to whom this luxury is forbidden and whose garb is of the greatest simplicity and modesty. It appears that once he covered over the entire figure of a Cleopatra the better to set off the shining beauty of a huge pearl. This, however, must by no means be taken as evidence of ordinary sensuality. It must, on the contrary, have a spiritual signification. The glitter of the jewels which he painted was thus made part of a "mystical vision" like the allegorical "rubies, emeralds and carbuncles" which enchanted the theosophical shoemaker Jacob Boehme. "His art grew in life and depth through mystical illuminations; he became a mystic," says Neumann. This interpretation leaves a great mystery. How could such a man have been a tireless and patient seeker after truth? Instead of using the facts to throw a little light on the problem, one has added arbitrarily to the confusion, reducing everything to the "hylozoic, primordial chaos" of Boehme. For the alchemists this curious expression represents the philosopher's stone. Modern wisdom has made it into an idol whose pious veneration by the aristocracy of the learned appears every bit as fashionable as the attend-

# A Glimpse of Incomprehensibles

# GEORGE W. CORNER

NE OF THE MOST INTERESTING PROJECTS now under way at our laboratory is an experimental study of the behavior of uterine muscle. Dedicated as we are to the study of embryology, we are bound to consider the environment in which the embryo lives, and in particular that remarkable muscular organ, the uterus, in which every one has his first home. A visitor who steps into the rooms of Dr. Arpad Csapo, the leader of this particular research, sees him facing a mass of apparatus, tubing and wires, all of which is focused upon a small vial housing a strip of rabbit's uterus, three centimeters long. This bit of living tissue is kept at body temperature in physiological salt solution. It is supplied with oxygen and with energy in the form of dextrose. Its environment is thus made as much as possible like that within the intact animal. One end of the strip is fastened to a lever, so that when it contracts, as any involuntary muscle will do of its own accord when so prepared, its rhythmic contractions are recorded on a drum. Watching the lever move up and down, watching the muscle itself shorten and then relax, the fascinated observer realizes with a start that what he is watching is an engine, as much an engine as those which run our motorcars. Like them it has its own firing system by which the energy on which it operates is turned into mechanical work by a kind of explosion. Dr. Csapo chooses to supplant this natural "spark-plug" mechanism by mild electrical shocks from a mechanical timer; thus gaining somewhat smoother timing, he finds that he is indeed running an engine in the most literal sense. The experiment becomes quantitative, like an engineer's test of any steam or gasoline engine. The energetics of operation can be calculated. The work done is precisely related to the amount of contractile

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protein in the sample and of the fuel used. The strength of the contractions (i.e., isometric tension) can be predicted from the size and physiological state of the muscle sample, and Dr. Csapo has even found a way, by the use of the ovarian hormones, to alter the mechanical performance in much the same way as when the pressure of steam supplied to a steam engine or the rate of carburetion of a gasoline motor is changed.

Thus far I have spoken only of isolated muscle tissue under fully controlled laboratory conditions; but we know also from very recent experiments by Dr. Brenda Schofield that the whole uterus, in the rabbit's body, operates on the same principle and would behave as uniformly except that it is affected by other complex regulatory factors, such as the nervous system and the ovarian hormones.

The nerves of the uterus apparently come into play chiefly for regulatory purposes on critical occasions; that is to say, the impulses they carry co-ordinate one part of the uterus with another when the fertilized eggs are to be received and accurately positioned in the uterus, and again when the infants are to be delivered. These nerve impulses are known to consist of ionic reactions; they and the blood flow that transports carbohydrate fuel to the uterus, in fact all the operative controls, are physico-chemical processes. The whole organ must be regarded as a mechanism, no less than the isolated strip, although the intact uterus *in situ* is of course a more complicated mechanism and less uniform in its activity under experimental observation.

The investigator, silently for hours watching and controlling these experiments, inevitably asks himself, Is not then the whole rabbit also a mechanism, and if so, why not the man who watches? His muscles and nerves and brain that devised the experiment, his curiosity that asked the questions, the energy that drives him to answer them—is not all this the product of biochemical reactions under fixed laws of the physical world?

This is an old question, as old as philosophy itself, to which in the past an answer has often been given one way or the other by scientist or theologian. It was put again to me, not long ago, by one of America's eminent scholars. This friend of mine, a professor of literature, has a doctor son who works alongside of us; perhaps it

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was the younger man's enthusiastic talk of biophysics that disturbed the father. Perhaps also the professor, who is expert in the history of eighteenth-century thought, is still irked by the brash statements of mechanistic philosophy given two centuries ago by men like La Mettrie, author of books entitled Man a Machine and Natural History of the Soul. At any rate, he asked me in all seriousness whether the advance of science and particularly of human biology does not threaten to reduce all human activity to physico-chemical terms and thus to destroy the humanities and do away before long with the arts and all learning, except physics.

In reply to the professor's question, I say in the first place that we anatomists, physiologists and biochemists are for practical reasons bound to work on the assumption that the animals and parts of animals we study are indeed mechanisms. We must try as hard as we can to bring all animal and human behavior under observation and measurement. If the premature acceptance of non-physical "vitalistic" forces leads us to abandon physical and chemical investigation, we shall only wander in a no man's land of conjecture.

In the second place, the progress of these sciences brings into the realm of materiality much that was once thought to be immaterial. One example of this will suffice. The phenomenon of vision was a great enigma to the ancients. Aristotle himself cried out in wonderment, "Who would believe that so small a space [as the eye] could contain the images of all the universe? What skill can penetrate such a wonderful process? This it is that leads human discourse to the consideration of things divine!" Since then we have marched steadily toward understanding human seeing as a physical and chemical activity. In Aristotle's time and in the Middle Ages, all existing knowledge was encompassed in a vague concept of the eye as the lantern of the soul. What we now call the lens was believed to be the central receptor of things seen, passing visual images inward to the soul itself. That the eye is a camera working on strict optical principles, and the retina its photoreceptor, became clear in the seventeenth century. In another hundred years, discovery of the optic nerve-fibers made known that the brain is involved in the process of vision. The actual areas of the brain concerned in seeing, and the exact pathways from the retina to the

cortex, were worked out in the nineteenth century; the biochemistry and biophysics of nerve conduction are the work of our own age. In view of all this progress toward a physico-chemical concept of the visual process from eye to brain cortex, should the biologist be thought too daring if he now expects that biophysics will one day explain the conversion of cortical optic responses into conscious thought, and trace all the channels over which they reverberate throughout the body, causing the seer to stare or tremble or soar in ecstasy at what he sees?

We are indeed daring, I admit, when we predict that consciousness will be explainable in physico-chemical terms, but nowadays even those who doubt the possibility of such understanding usually base their doubts not on grounds of vitalism or of piety, but on a materialistic argument involving a sort of uncertainty principle which states that a thinking machine is necessarily incapable of perceiving how it thinks.

Meanwhile, experimenters are attacking the citadel of the mind, the subconscious mind at least, by the study, for example, of conditioned reflexes. A clear description of one such investigation appeared in a recent number of the Scientific American, in an article by Professor Liddell of Cornell University on his experimental production of anxiety-states in sheep and goats. By the simplest physical means, namely the continuous administration of slight painless electrical shocks on a monotonously regular schedule, he produced long-continued disorders of emotional behavior. Again, anyone who has observed the effect on human patients of drugs like desoxyamphetamine has seen how high-level mental phenomena, that is to say, elaborate apprehensions, conscious fears, and disorders of judgment, can be altered for the time being by a physical agent that can only be hastening or retarding, somewhere in the brain, some such purely biophysical action as the passage of ions across the borders of specific nerve cells.

Rather, however, than to carry this line of argument for the material nature of human thought to the length of saying outright, with La Mettrie, that man is a machine and even his highest activities are the product of physical reactions, let us go back and look again at the small living mechanism with which we started, the

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muscle strip studied by my colleague. Simple as it seems, this little engine is actually much more complicated than a man-made motor. It is not made of metal, but mostly of complex, unstable proteins. It is not able to burn ordinary hydrocarbons like wood, coal or oil, but only one very special and elaborate substance, adenosine triphosphate. It has to make this fuel for itself from sugar brought by the blood stream, stepping up the chemical structure through at least a dozen enzyme processes until it has built what it can burn. It is not controlled by a throttle but by ion-movements across a semi-permeable barrier membrane. I have by no means stated all the complexities; if we could look inside this muscle when in action, we would see in each of its microscopic cells more ions, atoms, molecules and larger aggregates going systematically about their business than all the people and automobiles in the city of Philadelphia. I once made a calculation that one cell of an endocrine gland, the corpus luteum, produces in one day more than a thousand billion molecules of its internal secretion.

The muscle machine is not only very complex; it is also very unstable. It runs well only within a narrow range of temperature; 60 degrees centigrade will cook it; one crystal of cyanide will stop it quicker than a monkey wrench in a crankcase. The protein molecules of which it is chiefly composed are held in a precarious state of teetering equilibrium by interacting tensions, like the gymnasts in a human pyramid. Such is life at the level of the cell. At the level of the organs-heart, lungs, liver-and at the level of the body, life consists of the interaction of such complex and unstable, therefore sensitive, tissues and their co-ordination by equally complex and unstable tissues such as nerves and blood vessels. At the level of the mind, the structure in which thinking is done is no less complicated. Dr. Karl Lashley, in a pioneering essay "In Search of the Engram," on the physiological basis of learning, closely estimated the number of nerve cells in the visual apparatus of the white rat from retina to brain cortex, and got a total of thirteen millions. With these neurones the rat is able to retain (says Lashley) scores, perhaps hundreds of visual habits involving discrimination of complex figures. The rhesus monkey has about a hundred times as many visual neurones; man, we may conjecture,

a thousand times thirteen millions. A student reading his textbooks instantly distinguishes any one of ten thousand patterns presented by the printed words before him.

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This enormous, overwhelming, almost inconceivable complexity of the human structure and mental function forces us, if we are to be materialists, into materialism of a new sort. When La Mettrie said that man is a machine, a machine to him meant something like a clock or the primitive Newcomen steam engine. He must have realized that the human machine is more complicated than that, but still it was to him figuratively a thing of cogs and levers. If, however, I say that man is a machine, I have to think of an apparatus much more complicated than the biggest electronic computing machine, and also much less stable, much more sensitive than any piece of man-made automatic hardware. The difference between old and new concepts of the living machine is so great, so fundamental that twentieth-century scientific materialism is bound to be very different from that of the past. My variety of it, you may say when I finish, is not materialism at all.

Mention of electronic calculating machines brings us to the most recent aspect of mechanistic thought, the kind of analysis called cybernetics. This stems from the observation of certain similarities between electronic circuits and the structure and functioning of the nervous system. Not only is the transmission of the nerve impulse analogous to the electric current; not only are the synapses or nerve junctions analogous to electrical connections, and the primary reflex arc merely a doorbell circuit; more than that, something much like feed-back wiring and regenerative circuits can be seen in the brain, suggesting the existence of stages of amplification like those of a radio set. On the contrary, some of the mental activities of men and animals can be imitated by machines built on these principles: for example, simple remembering, simple discriminations, even choice between alternatives simply presented. Some of these operations are fairly impressive. Everyone has heard what the great computing machines can do, for example, in solving complicated differential equations in a fraction of a second. When a wartime committee under my direction was studying devices for the blind, the engineer Zworykin of the Radio Corporation of America

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built us a machine that recognizes the individual letters of a printed alphabet and calls them off vocally. Another less serious engineer made a mechanical bug that knows when it is hungry for more juice in its little battery, trots off to the proper socket, connects itself and gets a recharge. If there is radio interference in the neighborhood, I suppose the gadget might develop a simple sort of nervous prostration like Professor Liddell's sheep and goats.

This jest of mine reflects the feeling of conservative anatomists and physiologists that cybernetic concepts fall far short of explaining the workings of the nervous system, partly, I admit, because we have by no means worked out a complete description of the animal machine for engineers to imitate. There are a lot of circuits and connections still to be traced. Yet the parallel onward march of neurology, biophysics and electronic engineering makes it probable that all the operations of the animal mind result from the flow of electrical charges, that is to say, the transfer of ions in the cells of the body. When an experimenter produces neurosis in the sheep, or (to take a more agreeable example) when a hunting dog is conditioned to stand and point to a pheasant, I have no difficulty in supposing that the whole conditioning process occurs entirely on the material level. If asked whether I suppose this to be true also of more complex mental performances involving intricate choice of alternatives on the basis of a large stock of stored information, say, a fullback running through a broken field or Shakespeare writing a sonnet, I have to say I do not know. Even what I just said about the hunting dog is a hypothesis. We biologists are bound to work on such hypotheses, even if we do not expect that a good sonnet will ever be written by a man-made machine.

But suppose, just for the argument, that it is so, that all the higher activities of the mind—all that raises man above the unreflective beast and leads him to create arts, sciences and humane learning—suppose that this is entirely the result of ionic shifts in our cells for which we may some day calculate the equations: what then? Do we scrap our libraries and colleges? Is my humanist friend whose question started me on this essay to discontinue teaching the history of literature and philosophy?

What I now reply is not the utterance of mystics or metaphysi-

cians; it is the word of the histologist looking up from his microscope, the physiologist from his oscillograph. We see that the human thinking mechanism, if it is a mechanism, is utterly complex and multifariously sensitive beyond any conceivable instrument of metal and glass, and therefore its individual reactions will always be in large part unpredictable. Let me reinforce this statement by quoting again Karl Lashley, one of the most thoughtful of our neuropsychological experimenters. In his essay on the mechanism of learning, he writes:

The trace of any activity is not an isolated connection between sensory and motor elements. It is tied in with the whole complex of spacial and temporal axes of nervous activity. The space and time coordinates can, I believe, be maintained by . . . rhythmic discharges which pervade the entire brain, influencing the organization of activity anywhere. Within a functional area the cells acquire the capacity to react in certain definite patterns. . . . The characteristics of the nervous network are such that when it is subjected to any pattern of excitation, it may develop a pattern of activity, reduplicated throughout an entire functional area by spread of excitations. . . . All the cells of the brain must be in almost constant activity, either firing or actively inhibited. . . . The learning process must consist of the attunement of the elements of a complex system in such a way that a particular combination of cells responds more readily than before the experience.

The mental patterns of learning and of directed response, of which Lashley writes, are set up in an apparatus which in man consists of billions of neurones, interconnected through innumerable channels. The organ in which these patterns are stored is subject to excitation from outside through five senses, each of them so critically sensitive that a touch, a whiff of odor can suddenly revive a whole chapter of the past—one chapter for me, another for you; one syllable heard may set off a torrent of emotion or activity. The mechanism is also sensitive to stimulation from within itself by stored memories, by organic sensations, by local subthreshold fluctuations of physical states throughout the body. Surgeons sometimes have an opportunity to stimulate the brain directly, in a patient who is conscious and co-operative during an operation under local anesthesia. Dr. Wilder Penfield thus found that elec-

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trical stimulation at a single point of the cortex can elicit elaborate memories of things seen or heard. A big electronic computer has a bank of keys like a pipe organ; who can estimate the number of keys to the human mind, within the body and on the surface of its sensorium, through which impulses are thrown into one circuit or another, to start who knows how many oscillations in the next circuit, and the next? Nervous and mental operations involve, however, more than mere spread and flow of impulses. There are slowing and blocking resistors; there are shunts and diversions. There are circuits that operate to cut out other circuits, or to cut them in, or steady their oscillations. The elements of these circuits, moreover, are not copper wires, metal switches and electronic tubes. The conducting threads, as well as the whole organism they interconnect, are made up of elaborate and unstable chemical substances, very critically responsive to changing conditions.

Their hookup into a vast network is also unstable and critically responsive. Integration of an organism so that this multiplex system will behave in a measurably constant way calls for all sorts of internal controls—the homeostatic regulators that Walter Cannon wrote about—and in higher animals on the behavioral level it demands intensive habit formation by experience, training and education. Even when such patterning of response is well established, the richness of internal communication is so great that a small resistance here, a sudden surge of mental current there, in the network may channel the impulses in a new direction.

It is these uncertainties that create individual differences in behavior and capacity. They direct and redirect for good or bad whatever is passing through our heads. They must in some way account for the mystery of original thinking and artistic composition. They will forever keep education from being a routine business.

The complexity of human thought and behavior is of course nothing new; my point is that science has caught up with that fact and now perceives that the bodily mechanism possesses a similar order of complexity and therefore may be assumed capable of conducting very complex and subtle operations. A recent experiment illustrates perfectly what I am trying to say. One subject of Liddell's investigation at Cornell was a nursling goat, three weeks old.

When it was given the routine treatment of painless but unceasingly recurrent electric shocks, it developed the usual neurosis. This animal was one of twins. The other of the pair of kids was subjected to the same experimental treatment, except that its mother was left with it in the large stall where it lived during the period of exposure to emotional trauma. This second kid did not become neurotic at all. The presence of its mother had done something inside the little animal that kept its nerves from jangling. If its unprotected brother's neurosis was a mechanistic disturbance, from which the twin was protected by the comforting presence of a mother, then—at least in the case of these particular goats, under experiment by Liddell in a barn near Cayuga Lake—it looks as if the benefit afforded by the nanny's presence was also a biophysical phenomenon. But the scientist must admit that a mechanism that needs its mother is indeed a special kind of mechanism.

By such means as this, by the intercommunication of companionship, of mood, of sympathy and solace, individuals are integrated into still more complex organizations of flock and herd, family, tribe and race. In this gift of communication, living organisms greatly excel the machines. We have all been astonished by Von Frisch's discovery of the signal-language of honeybees. Certain manmade automatic control systems perhaps approach that achievement of the bees; but at a higher level how infinitely varied is the ability of human beings to transmit complex eddies of thought and emotion to one another!

Thus we have just about reached a truce in the old quarrel between vitalism and mechanism. Both sides perceive that whatever our respective hypotheses may be about the way things work inside us, we too are creatures subject to repeated shocks, born to trouble, yet capable of adjustment. More complexly organized even than other creatures, we can go beyond mere mental adjustment, on to new accomplishments and achievements; but all the more do we need the influences that come through human kinship and the experience of our race, all that is learned at a mother's knee and at the feet of alma mater, and in the world of arts and letters.

When I mentioned the experiments at Cayuga Lake, some readers may have thought of a shepherd who once tended flocks beside

# A GLIMPSE OF INCOMPREHENSIBLES

another inland sea, who experienced in his own person both frustration and adjustment, and who being a poet saw the parallel between his own trials and joys and those of his sheep. Lifting his eyes to heaven, he said as of a greater Shepherd, "He leadeth me beside the still waters, He restoreth my soul." I have not chosen to carry, here, my concept of the new mechanistics into the field of religion. Science and theology tend to get heavy-handed with each other when discussing this subject. La Mettrie was banished and his books were burned because of his materialism. I think I do not risk any such fate because of mine. The biologist realizes that the mechanism is so sensitive to outward influences, and to stimuli so subtle that current science is not able to define the limits of its sensitivity; and therefore, while in the laboratory he must base his own working hypothesis upon what he can see and measure, he will not in the present state of knowledge banish from the company of scholars any man whose personal hypothesis, or faith, takes him all the way with the highhearted old scientific humanist Sir Thomas Browne, who bade us, "Have a glimpse of incomprehensibles; and thoughts of things which thoughts but tenderly touch. Lodge immaterials in thy head; ascend into invisibles; fill thy spirit with spirituals, with the mysteries of faith, the magnalities of religion, and thy life with the honour of God."

Biophysics will not soon measure the wave length of exaltation like that; but even so, we shall go on exploring the body and brain. Let not my learned friend be troubled; if and when all the circuits are traced, when the last equation is written for the ionic movements that run the works in eye, ear, nerve, muscle and viscera, the mechanism, however fully we then understand it, will still be complexly excitable and still sensitive to all the subtleties of a subtle universe. New combinations of neurones will go on being formed. Individuals will still be unpredictable. Patterns of behavior will still have to be established by training and education. Human history will not cease being made nor poetry to be written. If all the nerve cells are to be kept firing in the most effective sequence, some of the keys of the human mechanism will still have to be operated by the professors of languages and literature, by artists and by philosophers.

# On First Looking into America

# IAN WILSON

THERE IS NO NATION, to my knowledge, more addicted to the pastime of self-analysis, both individually and collectively, than the American. In support of this argument one may point, on the one hand, to the dominant position attained by the psychiatrist in a community whose members find it increasingly more difficult to adjust to the precipitate hustle of the machine age that they have created; and, on the other, to the avidity with which they devour whatever literature purports to show them as they really are. Whether this is due to the vanity of an actor collecting press clippings or to a sincere belief that the gift "to see oursels as others see us" will "frae monie a blunder free us," I do not feel disposed to say. But, for whatever reason, the market for comment on the American way of life is seemingly inexhaustible, and—this being an economy devoted to the laws of supply and demand—so long as it lasts, just so long will there be a Bryce or Brogan, a de Tocqueville or Maurois. In seeking to trade on this trait by setting down the most outstanding of my two months' impressions, my sole justification is that I have been able to combine nearness of observation with a certain remoteness of association; for I cannot yet speak of Americans as "we": they are still what Carson McCullers might call the "you" of me.

It may be, as Jacques Barzun claims, that the best way to see America is from a lower berth about two in the morning—best, that is, for one who seeks to capture the true sense of vastness in the land as nature shaped it. But to toss the new immigrant into the deep end of such a primeval pool would be an awesome, perhaps even a shattering experience. His first requirement in his new life is to equilibrate himself, to achieve virtually a new philosophy;

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and that can only come from the gradual approach. So it is probably better that the first sights he sees should be the already familiar landmarks of the Statue of Liberty and the Manhattan skyline: they may be signposts on a new road, but they also leave the newcomer with a sense of "I-have-been-here-before." Yet, paradoxically, it is this very sense of superficial familiarity, this feeling of sameness, born of his newspaper-reading and visits to the local cinema, that is his most besetting danger in the process of equilibration. Because some landmarks are familiar, because certain political institutions and fundamental concepts have been transplanted from the Europe he has left, and especially because he has an instinctive feeling that, basically, people are the same the world over, he is in danger of assuming that everything is similar. The inevitable reaction then is to assert that what is different must necessarily be worse. Disillusioned immigrants and visitors have been responsible for as much distortion as Hollywood in their reporting of the American scene, for they develop a grudge against a system with which they are not equipped to deal and idealize the country they have left-often with great bitterness and no regrets—out of all recognition.

Before leaving England I was told—as who is not?—that I would find Americans adolescent, optimistic, exuberant, energetic, naive, friendly, and without culture. All this is, of course, true. It is also true that some Americans are mature, despondent, sophisticated, xenophobic, and that they have more than six hundred and fifty symphony orchestras. In no nation is it harder to get at all the facts, and generalizations are the gravestones that mark the resting place of many a commentator's reputation. It is a refusal to admit, even tacitly, the coexistence of opposites that makes, at best, for oversimplified views and, at worst, for outright distortion. Forewarned of this danger, I set myself to work out the implications of the fact that America is not merely a larger Britain or a larger France, but a larger Europe. In every comparison one must first be sure that like is being compared with like, and then allow for the residual differences before making one's assessment. It is not enough, I felt, merely to remember to compare America not with any one country, but with Europe as a whole: I must also allow for the complicating factors of history and the intermingling of polyglot communities.

If America has produced a Huey Long and the Klan, I remember that Europe has been the birthplace of Goebbels and the Croix de Feu. If gangster is, as the dictionary says, "colloq., U.S.," it is equally apposite as a description of a Nazi thug or a British cosh-boy. If materialism and lack of culture are charged against the citizens of this republic, what are we to say of the underfeeding and inadequate housing of millions in Italy and France, or the absence of any but the most stereotyped art and music in the "People's Democracies"? I do not want to suggest that a guest should find no fault with the host-country, but rather that he should condemn what is wrong for what it is, and not for being American.

My contacts so far have centered around personalities in industry and commerce, but insofar as the business community is a cross section of the community as a whole and is considered characteristically American, my impressions perhaps have greater validity than the narrow basis for them would in itself allow. In the course of distilling thoughts from my experience, two remarks stood out in my recollection: neither was particularly profound, but each in its own way impressed me at the time of its utterance, and later set up a chain reaction of reflections. Louis and Howard, to whom I attribute the words, do not exist except by coincidence. (This is not said as an apology to either.) They are embodiments of qualities I have noted in the executives I have met—the presidents whose political overtones are scarcely less than those of their counterpart in Washington (a similarity of title that has, surely, peculiar significance in a country where "the business of government is business"); the vice-presidents who proliferate more rapidly than any other biological species; and the host of treasurers, controllers and other officials whose high-flown titles make one realize that you owe the Indians more than Manhattan at a bargain price. These two are thus composite personalities; but they are not, in any except the most literal interpretation, fictitious charactersstill less are they caricatures.

Louis is in his mid-forties, dynamic and restless, a man who will not suffer fools or frills gladly. A chemical engineer by training and an entrepreneur by vocation, he had set himself to make a

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million dollars. He had succeeded several times over; for success bored him and his dynamic found satisfaction only in the excitement of growth, so he had sold out whenever his ventures reached maturity. To him an Oxford arts graduate and (for better or worse) representative of British industry was obviously an object of mingled suspicion, perplexity and amusement when viewed as a possible recruit to the ranks of American management. He was polite and helpful, but firm.

"You see," he said, concluding his theme on "the place of the technician in management," "over here we work things somewhat differently. It's the man with technical qualifications—in production, engineering, sales—who is most likely to reach the ranks of general management. You must be prepared for the fact that many executives will tend to discount your British experience. We're as cocky as hell and don't like outsiders telling us how to run our business, especially if they don't have practical 'know-how.' And you can hardly blame us for suspecting that an arts course at Oxford is more suited to the classroom than the office."

From there on we adopted the conventional positions in any argument between the pragmatic and the quixotic, however far we may have felt ourselves from them at the outset.

Here was the old, old problem of the dichotomy between technology and the arts, between the specialist and the humanist. In Britain it is conscious staff policy with most large companies to recruit a certain number of arts graduates as management trainees. The cynic might say that this was making a virtue out of necessity (namely, the shortage of technologists), but it does have a positive motive. As Clemenceau said that war was far too serious a matter to leave to soldiers, so there is a growing belief that higher management is too important a matter to leave entirely to the technicians, that the man who combines a speculative mind with a broad fundamental education is best qualified to deal with the human and social aspects of organization. In America, however, the stress is laid almost exclusively on the engineer, the technologist, the specialist: it is a corollary to the production line and the fact that this country grew to nationhood as an industrial democracy. The mechanical specialist was the founder of the nation's fortunes, and

now comes nearer than anyone else to being a hero to a people not given to idolizing (the living, at any rate). The position of the specialist in education and the arts, it is interesting to note, is radically different. His opinions are considered no better than the next man's—if, indeed, he is not looked upon as an eccentric, a crank or an "egghead."

In a nebulous way-for there is much woolly thinking on the subject—the "lack of culture" criticism stems from resentment of these facts. One of Europe's literati might conceivably concede the existence of symphony orchestras, art galleries and public libraries, though he would probably insist that they were patronized by "exceptions." But, I believe, his fundamental objection is that the methods of the production line have been applied to education. It is the commercial specialization in colleges that sticks in his throat: "They turn out," he snorts, "not educated graduates, but bootblacks with degrees." Again, he objects that the subject matter of courses is predigested, processed and packaged before presentation: ideas are sifted from facts as chaff from wheat, and everything that has no commercial price is reckoned of no value. These criticisms are typical of the point of view that democratization of learning, anywhere, results in a leveling-down rather than a leveling-up: this view is relative and statistically false (pardon my "materialistic" approach), for the average standard is always and inevitably raised. One may, however, pardonably deplore the lack of individuality in tutorial approach to the student that results from a mass onslaught on education with an inadequate supply of teachers, provided—as always-that it is recognized that neither the problem nor the defect is peculiar to America.

As I left Louis I realized how fatally easy it is to fall into a trap even when you have foreseen it. I could almost sense the traditional prejudices crystallizing in my mind: "He is what you might expect of American business—the lack of sensitivity and fine appreciation; the cynical view of liberal arts; the money-grabbing instinct and devotion to material success." Of course, he didn't actually say all that—he didn't have to! The implication is that you are being far-sighted and objective, whereas in fact your disappointment at not finding the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow blinkers you to

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all open-mindedness. It was a chastening experience, but it taught me a new lesson: in a society which has been built up from many peoples and temperaments, compromise is more vital as a *modus vivendi* than in a homogeneous society. Obvious? Perhaps, but every immigrant has to learn it the hard way.

As if to point the truth of the coexistence of opposites, my next meeting was with Howard. Now in his early fifties, he has been with a large corporation for nearly thirty years, ever since he left college with a degree in economics. His philosophy of business is that in a modern industrial society, thinking has taken the place of fighting, despite the jibes of the unrestricted free-enterprisers that such a view represents hardening of the economic arteries. I told him of my talk with Louis, and then, recognizing that my point of view depended upon the objectives one set before business, I asked what he felt these objectives were in America. He paused a moment -I admitted I had pitched him a fast ball-and then said: "Well, I guess I'd put it this way. Our prime responsibility at present is to prove that American business can solve its problems better in a free economic system than in any other, to justify—if you like to put it another way—the American Way of Life." (I'm sure he used verbal capitals: or was there a twinkle in his eye?) "Second, we should assume our share of community responsibilities, and make our corporation a better place to work in, by good wages, fair play and respect for the individual."

It was my turn to pause: I had not expected so formal and lofty a statement "off the cuff." One can argue that it is so vague and general as to be meaningless, or that he had recently addressed the local chamber of commerce. But the more I thought about it later, the more revealing I found it, in two respects. The first is a point not much spoken of here, perhaps because it is taken for granted, and certainly not appreciated as it should be by Europeans. I mean the sense of communal responsibility which both contrasts with and complements self-reliance. Looking back on it, I could mentally identify Howard with the former and Louis with the latter, though it would be truer and fairer to think of both characteristics being present in each in varying degrees. In the days of frontier pioneering, whose traditions and mores still condition

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much of present-day American life, a combination of these two qualities was virtually necessary for survival. For his daily bread, his warmth and shelter, the frontiersman had to rely on the strength of his arm, the quickness of his eye and the sharpness of his wits. Life was a matter of individual performance, and economic conditions were so rudimentary that there was still validity in the old Puritanical belief that a man's failure was exclusively the result of his own shortcomings. For defense, government and entertainment, he could look to his neighbors, but only insofar as he fulfilled the obligations that the community imposed upon him. For all that a man might be left to his own devices for nine-tenths of the time, he was always expected to be ready with hospitality to a guest and aid to the distressed; the frontier had no place for the introvert or egoist in its society. Nowadays, and even in urban communities, the same basic tenets apply. On the one hand, private enterprise—so vital and ubiquitous that it has come to be equated with the American way of life-promises opportunity and rewards to all in proportion to a man's labor (we all know that practice falls somewhat short of the promises). On the other, the vitality of the community spirit is attested by the American's love of "joining"; local groups -P.T.A., community theater, town parliament-exert a commendable appeal, especially to the women, who are less content than their European counterparts to be merely housewives. Even the architecture reflects this spirit: for me there is no more convincing symbol of American "outgoingness" than the front porch with its inviting collection of chairs and that cradle of romance, the swing.

The other point about Howard's statement that set me thinking is one that would be most noticeable to an Englishman. Bluntly, Americans seem to me to overdramatize situations, to take themselves too solemnly. In politics, patriotism, business and individual life, there is a tendency toward the sonorous phrase, the ringing tone, the hand-on-heart attitude. I do not want to say either that life is not a serious matter (God knows it is that!) or that Americans have no sense of humor (though I would not cite the popularity of the so-called "comic strips" in evidence). Nor do I want to pass judgment: I merely report a difference. The pheasant does not have

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the peacock's gaudy plumage; but I do not blame either bird on that account.

Perhaps what I am wanting to say comes out most clearly in the attitude toward patriotism. This is a subject on which the Englishman is "strong and silent," the American direct and vocal. The Englishman says that something is "not cricket," the American that it is "un-American." There is a labored self-consciousness in the propaganda of patriotism that strikes a jarring note in my ears as yet unattuned to the varied sounds in the American orchestra. Yet I realize that this is in fact the keynote that must be struck repeatedly if all the instruments are to play in harmony. The concept of flag and Constitution accords more closely with the Frenchman's la patrie or the German's Vaterland (how appropriate that the former should have feminine, and the latter masculine connotations!) than with the Englishman's ideas about his native land—or even that great imponderable, the Crown.

It also seems strange and unnecessarily solemn for Howard to talk of industry "justifying the American way of life": strange, but not inexplicable. In the international field one cannot fail to notice in American policy the belief, sometimes announced but always implicit, that America has a mission to bring its way of life to the world. We went through the same stage a century or more ago: Pitt could talk of England saving Europe by her example, and the Victorians of bringing peace to the "lesser breeds without the law." Then it was the "pax Britannica"; now it is "pax Americana." Both may be sincere and dedicated; but both seem pompous to other nations, as a schoolmaster seems pompous to his pupils. The equating of American business with the American way of life carries over into the industrial field some of the phrases and attitudes of political evangelism; and the ensuing effect is somewhat incongruous, as if some corporation president were donning Liberty's robes and wielding her torch.

There are some subjects on which every visitor and immigrant is expected to voice an opinion as a matter of reflex action. On some—parkways, supermarkets and air conditioning—I am merely conventional in my praise: on others I reserve judgment. Of "beizbol"

I can only say that it surprises me that the Russians should seek credit for inventing such an anarchic pastime; of radio commercials, that I have not yet developed the technique of selective deafness; of New York, that it is the finest city in the world to escape from.

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An Englishman in America must always remain a being apart, "at once more foreign and more familiar," as Alistair Cooke has said: except in corporation titles the hyphenated "Anglo-American" does not exist. My fortune is to have made good friends, but if there are ever moments when I feel more foreign than familiar, I can take my Brooke or Keats in hand to read and reminisce, "Silent, upon a peak in Darien," (Connecticut).

## Rebuilding American Cities

## The Challenge of Urban Redevelopment

#### NATHANIEL S. KEITH

The crisis of american cities has been viewed with alarm for decades. The decay and obsolescence of the central sections of our metropolitan areas, the spread of slums and blight, the quickening tempo of the flight to the suburbs have been of increasing concern to municipal officials, city planners, newspaper editors, union officials, downtown merchants, and certain segments of the real estate and banking fraternity. This is to mention only a few of the groups which react strongly to the state of affairs in our cities as places in which to live, work and capitalize on investments.

Over the past ten to fifteen years, the growing attention to the plight of American cities has given rise to countless discussions, to numerous investigations and political inquiries, and to many proposed panaceas. Some of the latter have been on a very rarified plane, proposing a complete recasting of the physical structure of cities on a scale comparable to rebuilding after an atomic bombardment. Others, at the opposite extreme, have grossly oversimplified the problem as merely a matter of requiring the owners of substandard properties to make minimum repairs: witness the recurrent enthusiasm of some circles for the "Baltimore plan."

Between these extremes, however, there has developed increasing recognition that the hard core of the crisis of American cities lies in the physical obsolescence of much of their central sections and that feasible solutions to that crisis must involve ways and means of removing those obsolete physical structures. In short, this is the principle of urban redevelopment.

This is not to say that there are not many other equally crucial

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symptoms of the ills of our cities: over-all congestion, distorted land uses, traffic jams, inadequate parking, horse-and-buggy street patterns, insufficient or obsolete community facilities, smoke and smog, and river pollution. It certainly is not to deny that the plight of our cities reflects the absence of planning when they were first developed and that efforts to remedy that plight make sense only within a framework of up-to-date and realistic city planning.

But it is definitely to say that a comprehensive attack on those ills can progress only if the way is cleared of the brick and mortar of worn-out and misplaced structures, which in the main represent private property and are usually too expensive for private enterprise to acquire merely for purposes of demolition.

More than four years ago, Congress took a far-reaching step to help solve this problem. This was done under Title I of the Housing Act of 1949 by authorizing federal loans of \$1,000,000,000 and capital grants of \$500,000,000 to assist cities in carrying out urban redevelopment projects. The theory was that by the combination of federal financial assistance and the use of local powers of eminent domain, it should be possible to assemble sizable blocks of the blighted real estate that lies athwart the rebuilding of central sections of cities, to clear that land and write down its cost to a feasible value for new development, and to sell or lease it primarily to private enterprise for rebuilding in accordance with a definite local plan of land use. The law further required that the redevelopment plan for each project be in accord with a general plan for the development of the locality as a whole.

This program, new and untested and without substantial precedent, has been slow in gathering momentum. But by now, approximately 60 projects are under way in over 30 cities. These involve the acquisition and clearance of over 2,000 acres of slums and blighted areas. Their redevelopment—in new housing, public improvements, or new commercial or industrial facilities—will involve an investment of about \$600,000,000, primarily in private funds. In about 70 other communities, projects involving over 3,000 acres of blighted city land are in the final stages of planning, while about 120 other localities are in the process of selecting their first project areas. In short, all cities with population of over

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1,000,000, most of the middle-sized cities and many of the smaller ones have redevelopment programs under way or on the planning boards.

There are numerous indications that events over the next year will have a decisive bearing on whether this burgeoning program will move ahead and make a valid contribution to the revival of American cities, one worth its cost in federal and local funds and in time and trouble. From the forces assembling in behalf of redevelopment, the prospects appear to be favorable for a successful weathering of this test period.

The growing support for redevelopment comes from a variety of sources. The typical attitude of big city mayors was recently voiced by David L. Lawrence, the astute Democratic boss of Pittsburgh and himself a pioneering leader of redevelopment in his own city. He said, "The urban redevelopment program is the only method that we have found which can be put to work to rebuild our cities in a comprehensive manner, and make our outworn obsolete districts function for us socially, economically, and fiscally. . . . This is our great domestic problem; our great domestic opportunity. And all too possibly it is our last chance."

Support from a different vantage point came recently from General Otto L. Nelson, Jr., vice-president of the New York Life Insurance Company and head of "Project East River," the too-little-noticed study of urban vulnerability to atomic bombardment conducted in 1952 for the federal government. In a speech last October before the American Society of Planning Officials, he warned that congested central city areas were sitting ducks for fire storm destruction from atomic bombing unless high priority is given to a stepped-up program of slum clearance and redevelopment to reduce population- and building-densities. He went on to say: "Nearly every step that needs to be taken to reduce the vulnerability of our cities in case of war ought to be taken any way in order to make our country a better place in which to live and work, irrespective of peace or war. This is not a convenient slogan—it is a fact."

Perhaps most significant from the standpoint of the immediate future of the redevelopment program is the attitude taken by the

Advisory Committee on Government Housing Policies and Programs appointed by President Eisenhower last fall. This group, heavily weighted with Republicans and with commercial and mortgage bankers and representatives of the real estate and building industries, scrutinized redevelopment along with related programs over a three-month period. In its report in December, the committee called for a broadened redevelopment program and for future increases in the available federal funds. The committee said, "To wipe out existing slums and to check the spread of blight is a major goal of our housing program. To reach this goal we must remove houses and clear areas of our cities which are beyond recall; we must restore to sound condition all dwellings worth saving. ... A piecemeal attack on slums simply will not work."

Behind this varied and growing support for redevelopment lie the shocking dimensions of slums and blighted areas in this country. The statistics show that in 1950, over 11,500,000 dwelling units or 30 per cent of the non-farm housing supply were delapidated, or lacking private indoor flush toilet or bath or hot or cold running water. While a considerable proportion of these dwellings could be subject to repairs or the installation of standard sanitary facilities, there is general agreement that from 5,000,000 to 7,000,000 units are beyond hope of salvage and are ripe only for demolition.

While there is considerable variation among cities in the ratio of poor housing to good housing, the slum problem is a universal one among American communities, with the possible exception of a few of the most exclusive bedroom suburbs of large metropolitan areas. During the four years that I headed the federal urban redevelopment program, I personally inspected the slums of more than 60 cities from east to west and from north to south and gained a paper knowledge of the slums of another 200-odd communities. There are the tenements of Boston and New York, which were ready-made but durable slums from their inception. There are the mansions-converted-into-slums of Cleveland, Chicago and Los Angeles. There are the miserable "nigger shanties" of the South and the "skid rows" and Mexican "shack towns" of the West. In fact, in my travels I encountered a curious spirit of competition

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among local officials who would frequently boast to me that their community has "the worst damn slums in the country."

However, the problems created by blight and obsolescence cut wider than the shameful living conditions of the slums. The slums are heavy deficit areas from the standpoint of city treasuries. Many of them are in locations now totally unsuited for residential use but which could provide much needed room for expansion and modernization of downtown business and commerce. Many of them freeze hopelessly outdated street patterns and frustrate the quest for open space and ease of circulation, which are among the primary facts of life in the fight against urban congestion. In short, our cities are struggling with an obsolete physical pattern which developed without anticipation of the tremendous expansion of urban population within the past half-century or of the revolution in living habits caused by the gasoline engine.

An equally potent factor in the support for urban redevelopment is the need for public underwriting of its cost. At least nine times out of ten, it will cost substantially more to acquire built-up city real estate—even though it be severely blighted—than can be recovered from selling the underlying land at a price that will be attractive and feasible for new private development. In exceptional locations and under exceptional circumstances, it may pay a private entrepreneur to buy a Ritz-Carlton Hotel in New York City simply to tear it down and provide a site for a new office building. But in the vast majority of cases, there would be no takers if blighted real estate were offered to private enterprise on that basis. The persistence of slums over the decades is the best evidence of the truth of that statement.

Furthermore, given the existing allocation of the tax dollar between the federal and local governments and the costs of essential municipal services, the federal treasury must absorb the bulk of the cost of urban redevelopment. Redevelopment laws were on the statute books of twenty-four of the most populous states prior to the passage of the federal law; with few exceptions there had been no activity under them due primarily to the lack of state or local financing. In 1947, I assisted the late Senator Robert Wagner in conducting a poll of mayors on the urban redevelopment question,

as part of the studies leading up to the Housing Act of 1949. Over 95 per cent of them reported that federal financial aid was essential if urban redevelopment was to be an effective program. I am sure a similar poll conducted today would show at least as high a percentage on this question.

Under the present federal law, federal capital grants can absorb up to two-thirds of the net cost of an urban redevelopment project, i.e., the difference between the cost of buying the old real estate, demolishing the buildings and installing the site improvements, and the appraised value of the cleared land for new development. The balance is contributed by the local government in cash or in the cost of new public improvements. Based on practical experience, this appears to be the maximum freight which can be borne by strained municipal treasuries.

The justification for spending federal funds for redevelopment is a matter of the national benefits attached to maintaining the vitality of American cities. From a strictly dollars-and-cents standpoint, which is only one of the many considerations, the experience to date indicates that every federal dollar spent for capital grants will make possible about six to seven dollars in new private and public investment in the rebuilding of blighted areas. More important than this, in my opinion, are the benefits from combating urban decay. Since the economic strength of the nation rests primarily in its cities, it should follow that measures to keep cities physically equipped for modern living are at least as essential as federal aid for soil reclamation, crop price support or shipbuilding.

A further strong influence in support of redevelopment over the next year will be the example of the guinea-pig projects now under way. There is no need to claim perfection for these projects in all their details. The important fact is that they are proving that urban redevelopment will work. They are generally reducing the density of population in congested areas, drastically cutting the percentage of land covered by buildings, and developing new street systems, frequently in conjunction with other major traffic improvements. They are clearing slums which for decades have withstood the well-meaning efforts of civic organizations lacking the ammunition for effective attacks upon them. They are attracting private capital into

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the rebuilding of central sections of cities where private capital was unable or unwilling to venture before.

In New York City, under the forceful even if sometimes controversial leadership and prodding of Robert Moses, the seven redevelopment projects already under way and three others now ready to go will clear about 180 acres of heavily congested slums and rundown commercial buildings in Manhattan and Brooklyn. In their place, at a total investment of about \$250,000,000, will be built 13,750 rental and co-operative apartments, in buildings covering only 15 to 20 per cent of the residential land, a new coliseum with capacity for 18,000 persons, new buildings and expanded campus facilities for New York University, Long Island University and Pratt Institute, and a considerable area of neighborhood retail stores. In all, this represents a sizable bite into the slums and blighted areas of New York.

Philadelphia is also in the process of a major face-lifting operation through redevelopment, which was begun under the old Republican regime and is being pressed by the new Democratic regime of Mayor Clark. Redevelopment projects are under way or projected in three blighted urban neighborhoods which will lead to about 2,800 new dwelling units, with schools, playgrounds and new shopping areas. Also well advanced are plans for a new city within a city in the Eastwick section, a swampy area of some four square miles in the southeastern corner of the city. Now a hodge-podge of scattered shack towns, this area, after clearing and filling, is projected as a new community of 15,000 houses and apartments, complete with schools, parks and shopping centers, and including a new industrial district of about 900 acres.

Across the state, a fascinating coalition of Democratic politicians and big capitalists has provided the steam behind a sweeping plan for the revival of Pittsburgh. The principals have been, on the one hand, Mayor Lawrence and, on the other, the Mellons, United States Steel and its compatriots, and the big downtown merchants. Their common ground and common vision were to recognize that Pittsburgh must rebuild or fade away as an important capital of the American industrial empire. Under this impetus, the cluttered and worn-out Golden Triangle, where the Allegheny and Monongahela

Rivers join to form the Ohio, has been cleared of its old commercial structures, which are being replaced by a state park commemorating the original site of Fort Pitt and by three skyscraper office buildings in parklike surroundings. Accomplishment number two was to provide a site for a major new mill for Jones and Laughlin Steel, the only major steel plant remaining within Pittsburgh proper. The plant needed to expand and modernize; without redevelopment it could not have done so, since its properties were surrounded by slums which could not be assembled by a private buyer lacking the power of eminent domain. The Pittsburgh redevelopment coalition is now turning its attention to the Lower Hill district, a miserable slum of over 100 acres rising directly from the downtown district. This area is planned as a major cultural center for the city, developed in conjunction with new parkways and expressways and apartments commanding a view of the city and its rivers.

During the many years that Congress has intermittently examined the nation's slum problem, a favorite newspaper device for illustrating stories on these investigations has been a photograph of sordid alley shacks in Washington, D.C., with the dome of the Capitol rising majestically in the background. Many of these shacks still stand; others have been removed in piecemeal fashion. Finally, the surgical approach is being used on a 77-acre tract in southwest Washington, now a heavily built-up slum area bordering the Washington waterfront and within easy access of the business section and Capitol Hill. Here, 900 units of new housing will be developed, along with expanded recreational facilities, new stores, and the right-of-way for a major new expressway which will cross one corner of the project. This is only the first bite in a longer-range program for the full redevelopment of southwest Washington.

In the Midwest, Chicago is redeveloping 101 acres of congested slums on the Southside under a plan calling for 2,000 apartments, largely in high-rise buildings commanding a near view of Lake Michigan, for a major shopping center and for a park and school site, with only about 10 per cent of the land to be covered by buildings. In a second project, located just one mile from the Loop in an area surrounded by industrial and commercial development, a 50-

#### REBUILDING AMERICAN CITIES

acre pocket of ancient slums is being cleared for redevelopment as a planned light industrial district. These are the forerunners of an extensive program which will also tackle the problem of reclaiming thousands of acres of vacant land in "dead" subdivisions on the outskirts of the city, derelicts of the speculative real estate boom of the twenties.

One of the most dramatic demonstrations of redevelopment is the "Capitol Approach" program in St. Paul. Here, the Minnesota Capitol is being rescued from the blighted environment of 190 acres of run-down houses and a patchwork of obsolete streets. The immediate approach to the Capitol, involving about one-third of the acreage, has been acquired through state and city funds and is being laid out in an open plan of parkways, malls, and sites for new public buildings. Flanking the Capitol to the east and west, two redevelopment projects involving over 120 acres are under way. The old street pattern will be abandoned for a new design of parkways to carry through traffic and to serve as buffers for the rebuilt areas. About 1,250 apartments will be built, together with neighborhood parks, schools, and private office buildings and stores.

In Norfolk, the first redevelopment project of 127 acres is making possible the development of a modern traffic and highway system for the city and its connections with the nearby city of Portsmouth and with the massive naval installations in the area. In addition, land is being made available for industrial and commercial expansion and for public housing.

In Nashville, 67 acres of slum property surrounding the Capitol of Tennessee are being cleared to make way for high-class commercial development and a new street system. In Birmingham, a 60-acre blighted residential area will be removed to provide for a greatly enlarged medical center in connection with the University of Alabama Medical School.

San Francisco, the earliest Western metropolis and a city largely hemmed in by natural boundaries and becoming land hungry, is the pacesetter for redevelopment in the West. One project involves a 109-acre bite out of the "Western Addition," that part of old San Francisco which was unscathed by the earthquake and fire of 1006 and which has grown increasingly blighted and congested

with the years. This area will be redeveloped at much lower density, with about 2,000 apartments and with supporting commercial and public facilities and traffic improvements. A second project involves reclaiming Diamond Heights, 325 acres of hill land hitherto unusable for building, five miles from the center of the city and commanding magnificent views of San Francisco Bay. Land for about 2,500 units of private housing of all building types will be made available, in addition to schools, parks and shopping centers.

This, then, is a cross section of the first experimental probe of redevelopment into the structure of American cities. Similar programs are under way in Somerville, Massachusetts; Providence; Stamford; Portchester; Jersey City; Newark; Perth Amboy; Chester; Baltimore; Detroit; Cincinnati; Kansas City; Murfreesboro and Union City, Tennessee; Bristol, Virginia; Montgomery; Mobile; Little Rock; Honolulu; and numerous cities in Puerto Rico. Others are maturing in cities like Boston, Worcester, Hartford, New Haven, Harrisburg, Cleveland, Columbus, Toledo, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, St. Louis, Sacramento and many smaller towns.

These are encouraging beginnings, offering good evidence of the feasibility of redevelopment but only scratching the surface of the total problem. The full program of \$500,000,000 in capital grants now authorized would finance the redevelopment of perhaps 10,000 acres of slums and blighted areas, containing about 200,000 substandard dwellings. The value of the new buildings and other improvements in these areas would be between \$3,000,000,000 and \$3,500,000,000. This would have a measurable impact on the structures of cities but it would have cured directly only 3 to 4 per cent of the total problem of urban blight. As a one-shot performance without continuity, the benefits would be overshadowed during the years by the continuing pressures for urban decay.

Based on these beginnings, what are the realistic prospects for an expanded effort, on a scale commensurate with the size of the problem?

In my opinion, the answer to that question rests largely on three factors: first, the ability of cities to move their redevelopment programs at much faster tempo than during the experimental period

#### REBUILDING AMERICAN CITIES

since 1949; second, the crystallization of support for redevelopment in a manner that will overcome the many economic and political obstacles, both local and national; and third, the willingness of the Eisenhower Administration and of Congress to give more than token backing to a stepped-up program.

As to the first factor, the relatively slow pace of redevelopment thus far is understandable in terms of the complexity and novelty of the undertaking. While redevelopment can never become a simple or automatic process, there is ample evidence that with this experience behind them, the local redevelopment agencies can move ahead with their second and third run of projects much more rapidly.

The support for redevelopment is reaching into quarters which should prove effective in quieting local opposition, such as that stemming from slum landlordism, and also prove helpful in advancing the program on the national plane. In most cities, the downtown banks, the large downtown merchants and the other business establishments with a stake in the revival of central business districts are supporters of redevelopment. Builders, real estate investors and mortgage-lending institutions are showing greater interest in a program which is beginning to offer opportunities for large-scale construction in central locations. Joined with these sources of support are most city governments, civic-minded organizations and organized labor.

As to the status of redevelopment in the Washington scene today, the situation is more complex. On the one hand, the Administration is supporting legislation embracing the recommendations of the President's advisory committee for a broadened program. On the other hand, the execution of such a program must cope with the pressure for public retrenchment and run the gantlet of those groups in Congress and elsewhere which view most federal grantin-aid programs with skepticism if not with suspicion. Furthermore, it will face the flirtation of some influential groups with rehabilitation and various "fix-up" plans as a cheap substitute for the basic job of rebuilding.

Nevertheless, the balance of forces is such that redevelopment will doubtless survive the Congressional test this year and next. This

is made all the more likely by the increasing sensitivity of the Administration to the fears of a substantial economic recession. To stimulate six or seven dollars of new private investment for each federal dollar spent in grants for redevelopment would be one of the cheaper ways of cushioning the economy.

Whether sufficient push will emerge to carry redevelopment to full maturity in the near future is a much more uncertain question. A case in point is that the Administration has not backed up its support with a request for increased program funds at this time. Nevertheless, in my opinion, now is the time to press for continuity in redevelopment on a much broader scale. I believe a realistic objective would be a program of \$2,000,000,000 additional in federal grants, contemplating eventual expenditure of these funds at an average rate of about \$250,000,000 a year. This would represent a little more than 1/3 of 1 per cent of the present federal budget and perhaps 1/2 of 1 per cent of the minimum achievable federal budget.

On such a scale, redevelopment would have the opportunity to progress to maturity. A program of this size would clear 40,000 to 50,000 acres in the most congested areas, removing perhaps 1,000,000 substandard dwellings. It would open up those areas for rebuilding on modern plans providing for ease of circulation and substantial open space. It would stimulate directly a new investment of \$12,000,000,000 to \$14,000,000,000 in housing, commercial and industrial facilities and public improvements. It would indirectly stimulate substantial additional off-site expenditures for rehousing and public improvements.

I do not pretend that such a program would bring on the millennium in urban life. But it would provide a solid base for the revitalization of the central sections of cities and for reversing the long-term trend of urban decay. In view of the mounting pressures for relief of the crisis of our cities and the impact of that crisis on our huge concentration of urban population, this may well prove to be an achievable objective within the not too distant future.

# ..... Under Whatever Sky .....

#### IRWIN EDMAN

#### Only 'Til Tomorrow

Man's whole life often becomes strangely ocused at his death. No matter what else ie has done, some phrase he has invented, ome title he has used, stamps itself on the public mind. It becomes a symbol and ultimately a cliché. This was exactly what nappened to Frederick Lewis Allen and his book Only Yesterday. He had done many other things and, as his friends knew, was wide and varied personality. But Only Yesterday, even to those who have never ead the book so entitled, conveyed perectly a sense of both memory and nostalgia. Even those who had been infants in the wenties or were unborn at the time derived from the pages of that short and idroit social history a sense of a lost though odd and hectic Arcady.

Each of us has his own "only yesterday" ind nostalgia is at the moment a highly exploited emotion; even the bad old yesterlay has become the "good old days." One expects that any time now there is going o be what might be described as a reverse English on nostalgia, that there will be a book entitled Only 'Til Tomorrow. For t is not true that utopias are always put nto the wild and improbable future; here are near-handed myopic utopias, ronantic expectations of the instant realiation of some project, some program, some dea. It is not the Last Judgment that seems mmediately at hand, but some earthly paradise, some immediately-to-be-established and beneficent revolution in art, in gadgetry, n politics.

Thus on occasions we are told that it will be only 'til tomorrow that slums and shanty owns will disappear, only 'til tomorrow hat cancer and polio will be vanquished, only a long moment before the threats and larms of war will be dispersed. The tonorrow does not come, or it does come and he promise is unfulfilled. Does one not emember when as a child one was promised hat one would be taken to the circus to-

morrow and—one burst into tears? Tomorrow seemed and was an eternity off; and the tomorrow of the social reformers, the medical ameliorators, seems centuries off too. Only the gadgets seem to arrive ahead of schedule, particularly the lethal ones that seem only to put utopia off to an impossibly distant century after tomorrow.

#### The Survival of What Fits In

Anyone who has reflected on the philosophy of criticism is aware how different are the criteria by which one judges books. The psychologist, the sociologist, the moralist, the historian, the précieux, the craftsman, all bring their special interest and their special accents to bear on the judgment of literature. But there is one type of reader, or rather, a reader under special and happily temporary circumstances, who perhaps throws a new and unexpected light on the criteria of literary truth—namely, the man in the process of moving, especially if he happens to be moving from larger to smaller quarters, and especially if he happens to be living in New York, where space is at such a premium that sometime soon even literate people will have room only for a book a month, if not of the month, one copy of Life and Duncan Hines's Adventures in Good Eating.

In the course of years as a voracious reader and as one professionally concerned with books, I found recently, when I was about to move, that despite periodic bursts of cleaning out books, foisting some upon friends and upon libraries too poor to look a gift anthology in the mouth—despite all of this, I was inundated. Books kept coming in, as my housekeeper used to say, "like sacks to the mill." I was moving into smaller quarters and there was no choice for it-I had to choose among books, many of them very good ones. The decisions were something between a major crisis and heartbreak. There were books I could scarcely bear to part with, although I finally did.

There were volumes not important in themselves, but deeply important in my own memories and initiations. There was, for example, something called Selections from Walter Pater, a badly printed and, in fact, I found as I glanced through it, not too well selected anthology of Pater's purple and beige patches. But the book called to my mind my initiation into fastidious prose, and it was fused in my memory with a whole year's study of Victorian literature as a sophomore. Carl Van Doren was my engaging teacher, all the more engaging as he revealed sometimes, by a good-naturedly conspiratorial smile, that he himself did not take the Victorians quite as seriously as he was supposed to.

There was in my collection a volume called Essays for College Men containing, among other things, a Phi Beta Kappa address by Woodrow Wilson (then president of Princeton University) called "The Spirit of Learning," which seemed to me the wisest thing I had ever read about education—and when I read it at the age of seventeen, I suppose it was. I found myself rereading the essay; it is still good, so good that it delayed my moving for fifteen minutes. After a great crisis of decision I kept the book.

There were other problems: Did I really need to retain Harnack's History of Christian Dogma—in seven volumes? How large a library I had intended to build when I bought that work thirty years ago, I cannot imagine. I think it must be all of fifteen years since I have looked at that learned and stodgy work. It was not hard to persuade myself that I could do without it, nor was it very difficult to convince myself that I had to dispose of books that in their time had had a certain intellectual fashionableness—like The Tyranny of Words by Stuart Chase, who had suddenly discovered, somewhat later than Socrates, that people misuse words, and had come to the startling conclusion that all abstractions are nonsense. There was Count Keyserling's Travel Diary of a Philosopher, widely regarded in its day, though even then some reviewer—it could have been myself—described it as "a journal of a wandering mind." There was not even a question in my mind whether to pay storage charges on these and a hundred others. Of course, duplicate copies of one's own works pose a problem, and so do autographed copies of books by one's friends and vain or generous strangers. As time moved on and the removing date grew nearer, I found myself growing more and more ruthless. At the end I came very near throwing out extra copies of my own works, so badly was I driven.

Criticism has all kinds of criteria; but perhaps the main one in cities in America, and especially in New York, is what will fit into a given small space. Scholarly critics will, I think, call this the criterion of context. It is surprising on this basis how many books one can learn to do without.

#### The Irony of Distance

The pathos of distance is a familiar enough notion, though, it must be confessed, a vague one. In the contemporary scene, the irony of distance would be a more relevant and more precise phrase. For there is irony surely in the rapidity of transport. Waiting in an airport in Seattle, one hears within twenty minutes the droningly casual announcement of planes to Tokyo, to New York and Texas, to Manila, to Montana, to Boston. In sixty hours one can be anywhere in the world with, in the words of the late President Roosevelt, a bomb. But the casual civilian traveler can be anywhere or everywhere at least with a suitcase, and if one has forgotten anything, one can get it or its equivalent at Bangkok or Beirut. The airports where one arrives all look alike and the shops in and near them all look alike too. One flies—a deceptively melodramatic word for what feels simply like a bus trip halfway around the world to find one knows not just what, but actually to find what one has left.

On all of this is based the irony of distance in the modern world. It is actually just about as expensive to fly to Australia in three days as it would be if it took three weeks. It is not the slowness of travel, but the lowness of income that keeps people bound to their parish and to their province. An English farmer in Dorset may join

vicariously in the triumph of British jet airplanes, but it is doubtful whether he gets to London once a year in the Tuppington local. It is easy enough to get anywhere fast these days if one can arrange to get started, but the arranging is not easier than it used to be. It is doubtful comfort for the home-immured to console themselves with a latter-day streamlined version of an Odyssey.

If the answer to the question "How are things in Connemara?" is that they are just about the same at the airport as they are in Liechtenstein or Ceylon, it is much more comfortable and inexpensive to remain at home. Though it once took an endless journey of eighty days to get around the world, one saw something en route. So high and so fast do we fly now that we scarcely see anything at all; and what one does see, one could behold right at one's own doorstep. During the last war there used to be a poster in railroad stations, asking in large capital letters, "Is This Trip Necessary?" A good many people may well ask themselves now, "Is This Trip Necessary or Ultimately Rewarding?" Probably one had best just stay home and look at a travelogue of Bangkok on television. The experts will be sure to have picked out the parts that really look far away and long ago.

#### Open Letter to Foreign Friends

Dear Albanian, Frenchman or Turk:

I have been meaning for some time to write you a little letter of reassurance. It must occasionally seem to you from what you read in your own newspapers and in ours that we have all gone quite mad. Close as you are to the actual world of communism, you must sometimes wonder at the hysteria we display, and it must seem very odd to you that expressions of opinion that would by nineteenth-century standards have seemed mildly liberal at most, and are indeed only that, could be thought to be wildly revolutionary or dangerously totalitarian. I am afraid I have contributed to your malaise by sending you copies of American newspapers: Puerto Rican Nationalists shooting up our Congress and certain congressmen sounding as if they

would like to shoot up the world. You read of teen-age dope addicts in our cities and gangs of adolescent terrorists attacking passers-by. You hear perhaps that there are more inmates of our mental hospitals than there are inmates of our universities. I do not blame you in the least for being concerned about us. There are a good many among us so concerned themselves that they are whipping themselves into a frenzy of alarm and despair that will speedily add them to the patients in psychiatric clinics.

Now, dear interested foreigner, let me say a few words of reassurance. I live in New York, an immense place in which there is probably as much hysterical fanaticism and violence as any place in the United States. It is a metropolis of great congestion, where the conditions of transportation are such that visitors sometimes think a snarl is the obligatory form of greeting. But within the purlieus of this Babylon, every day in contacts casual or professional I meet an astonishing number of simple people going about their business and going about their pleasure with good sense and good humor. In fact, there are so many of them that their behavior is not newsworthy and they do not ever make the headlines.

So will you note the next time you read of some eminent political thug in our Senate, or some juvenile monster in our suburbs, will you not try to remember that our monstrosities are not any more numerous than anywhere else in the world? It simply happens that at the present time everything that happens in this country becomes a symptom of often alarming interest to the world outside our borders.

There is a story told among us about a Russian diplomat who accepted an invitation to a private home in Washington. After dinner he was taken up to see one of the offspring of the family. The child had fallen asleep, and when the father and stranger entered the room the youngster simply opened his eyes and smiled, a quite human if quite sleepy smile. "But he is like any other child!" said the Russian. Won't you try to remember that we are like any other of God's children too—for better or for worse?

## ..... The Revolving Bookstand .....

#### Crises in Education

ESSAYS ON EDUCATION. By A. Whitney Griswold. New Haven: Yale University Press. 164 pp. \$2.75.

#### Reviewed by George N. Shuster

Not every university president would venture to put into a book the random addresses he has delivered in order to save the world, admonish youth and balance the budget. If all did, the number of unctuous remarks which would be added to the literature of the nation would probably overtax even the latest calculating machines. But there is a quality of directness, honesty and manly concern in Dr. Griswold's speeches which is as reassuring as the things he talks about are important.

Of course he stresses the same points again and again. The liberal arts are being tossed overboard in the United States, he says, remaining convinced that they alone can make education what it must be if the nation is to remain intellectually and morally strong enough to meet its obligations in the world. Indeed, Dr. Griswold sometimes writes as if there is nothing that ails us which a hot application of the liberal arts cannot cure. But while it is possible to cite not a few mortals who seem to have done pretty well without the formal collegiate massage described, or to list others who took the cure without results determinably beneficent, the truth is nevertheless on Dr. Griswold's side. The fact that many of our ablest citizens receive a one-sided technical education while others obtain none at all is so obviously an American misfortune that one cannot talk about it too often or too sternly. The conception of

© GEORGE SHUSTER, author and educator, is president of Hunter College. He was a delegate to the 1946 UNESCO Conference in Paris and has served the State Department in the capacity of adviser on cultural relations.

the liberal arts is broader and more eclectic than that sponsored by Mr. Hutchins, but a kinship is manifest.

Two other notes are sounded again and again in the book, though they are immersed in the soft music played for Yale alone. The first is that American education, from the grade school to the university, is one unit, and that the success of the enterprise depends upon the excellence of all the parts. The second is that the nation is not at all adequately prepared to cope with the problem, and that in particular it will be fumbling badly once the bulge in the population begins to demand schooling. He is as right about them both as the Prophets. Therefore, it is utterly silly to engage in argument about public as compared with private education; both are indispensable, and only if both prosper in harmonious relationship can the challenge be met.

And met it cannot be unless there are enough good teachers in buildings which permit careful and intelligent training of young people. A quarter of a century ago, it was the rural child who fared poorly. Today the urban youngster is probably worse off than the boy or girl on the farm. So bad has the situation become in some places that an exodus from the cities for the sake of the children is taking place. The roots of our delinquency problem, moreover, are certainly to be found in the fact that it is at present impossible to give problem youngsters the kind of educational care they require. If the private schools are better off in this respect, it is only because they are in a position to screen out most of society's potential evildoers. Even so, one cannot fence off the elect without taking into account that sooner or later there will have to be a merger.

What Dr. Griswold says about these matters will, I trust, help to awaken Americans to a situation which gravely threatens the fundamental assumptions of democratic



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society. For example, if parents go on thinking that they can foist their children off on the schools, and then blame these for whatever goes wrong, they must face the fact that they will have to pay for the service, at least at prevailing baby-sitter rates. This holds for the college as well as for the elementary school. The bricklayer will have to understand that if the society in which he is paid more than the professor does not do something about the matter, the professor is going to lay brick too.

At two places I find myself dissenting a little. First, desirable though higher education in the liberal arts is, and liberating as campus life frequently remains, it does not seem to me that the extension of educational opportunity to all requires additions to college dormitories and four years of isolation from work. I am persuaded that, the hours of employment and the conditions under which they are given being what they are, it is entirely feasible for large numbers of people to acquire an education, and even a degree, in their leisure time, provided extension services and adult education opportunities are afforded in the proper manner. Second, I am persuaded that Dr. Griswold is too pessimistic about the status of European schools. The Germans, for example, have rescued their secondary schools; and many of these are again doing work which, if we are not careful, will make us look to our laurels.

But these are debatable matters. About the major issues with which Dr. Griswold is concerned, there can be no doubt. Either we shall cope with them or the quality of the national life will suffer grievously, perhaps calamitously.

## A Passionate Self-Appraisal

A WRITER'S DIARY. By Virginia Woolf. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 372 pp. \$5.00.

#### Reviewed by Leo Lerman

A Writer's Diary begins on Monday, August 4th, 1918: "While waiting to buy a book in which to record my impressions first of Christina Rossetti, then of Byron, I

had better write them here." It ends on Sunday, March 8th, 1941: "I think it is true that one gains a certain hold on sausage and haddock by writing them down." In the twenty-three years between Miss Rossetti and Lord Byron, the sausage and the haddock, Virginia Woolf gained more than "a certain hold" by writing down. Pursuing the moment, hot to transfix it, writing as much of it down as anyone ever had, and then managing somehow to write just a bit more, she bestowed upon each of us a little of her immortality. Novels, short stories, sketches, essays, criticism, biographies-she wrote in all of these forms. And concurrently she wrote what appears to be one of literature's most important self-revelations, her journals—twenty-six volumes of them. A Writer's Diary is a book of excerpts from these journals. These extracts are homogeneous, for Leonard Woolf, in arranging this much of the twenty-seven year record for publication, chose those entries which pertain to his wife's writing and reading. "The diary," he says, "is too personal to be published as a whole during the lifetime of many people referred to in it." Only future readers of the complete journal can judge how much of the banquet Mr. Woolf has given us. But this one volume of excerpts is, in itself, a feast.

In her essay on John Evelyn, written in 1920, Virginia Woolf said, "Should you wish to make sure that your birthday will be celebrated three hundred years hence, your best course is undoubtedly to keep a diary. Only first be certain that you have the courage to lock your genius in a private book and the humor to gloat over a fame that will be yours only in the grave. For the good diarist writes either for himself alone or for a posterity so distant that it can safely hear every secret and justly weigh every motive." Nowhere in A Writer's Diary does Mrs. Woolf evidence desiring, by the keeping of this diary, birthday celebrations

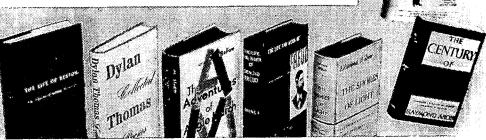
② LEO LERMAN is Mademoiselle's Contributing Editor, in charge of entertainment, books and the arts. He had made extensive studies of the works of Proust, Edith Wharton and Virginia Woolf.

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circa the year 2220. A score and more of published volumes testify happily that she did not have the courage to lock her genius in a private book. That she wrote for herself alone, some readers of A Writer's Diary will doubt. But even when making notes on public occasions, luncheons with the great, prize-givings, the eclipse of 1927 (a masterly piece of description), a visit to Thomas Hardy ("a little puffy-cheeked cheerful old man"), she writes in that semaphoric manner writers employ to capture and so preserve an impression, an essence—the sheen of light on a moth's wings, sunlight on water, a mannerism, the way colors sound and the way speech looks—the raw materials of burgeoning works. "It strikes me that in this book I practice writing; do my scales; yes and work at certain effects...."

But, of course, "this book" is much more than a writer's practice book. It is the private world of a most sensitive woman of great intellectuality, one of the twentieth century's supreme literary artists. Here is how she actually worked; how ideas first came to her; how they grew; how the work in hand eluded her, was almost what she hoped it to be, was nothing at all, was something quite unexpected. Here is torment and joy, misery, despair. ". . . in the few minutes that remain, I must record, heaven be praised, the end of The Waves. I wrote the words O Death fifteen minutes ago, having reeled across the last ten pages with some moments of such intensity and intoxication that I seemed only to stumble after my own voice, or almost, after some sort of speaker (as when I was mad) I was almost afraid, remembering the voices that used to fly ahead. Anyhow, it is done; and I have been sitting these 15 minutes in a state of glory, and calm, and some tears. . . . How physical the sense of triumph and relief is! Whether good or bad, it's done; and, as I certainly felt at the end, not merely finished, but rounded off, completed, the thing stated—how hastily, how fragmentarily I know; but I mean that I have netted that fin in the waste of water which appeared to me over the marshes out of my window at Rodmell when I was coming to an end of To the Lighthouse...."

And that, essentially, is A Writer's Diary, Virginia Woolf "in a state of glory," in a calm, in tears, in rapture, in passionate selfappraisal, in a fury at the inanities of the world, worried over her reviews, furious with friends who did not praise, in terror of that madness which hunted her down the years-Virginia Woolf, self-transfixed and captured in her own private moment, and always writing, reading and writing, the new book leaping up in her mind while the book upon which she labored jogged along. Saturday, November 23rd, 1940: "Having this moment finished the Pageant or Poyntz Hall? [later titled Between the Acts] . . . my thoughts turn well up, to write the first chapter of the next book (nameless) Anon, it will be called." But she never wrote it, for one March morning in 1941 she took up her walking stick and went away across the Downs. When she reached the River Ouse, she carefully placed her walking stick upon the bank and, fully clothed, moved resolutely into the river. So she killed herself appropriately, by drowning. She was fifty-nine years old. By her death, she completed what perhaps is her major work, her journal. "Queer," she had written in this very journal ten years before, "how one regrets the dispersal of anybody who seemed—as I say—genuine: who had direct contact with life. . . ."

#### The Introduction to Evil

THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER. By Davis Grubb. New York: Harper & Brothers. 273 pp. \$3.00.

#### Reviewed by WILLIAM MICHELFELDER

One might venture that this beautiful, almost shadowy first novel is a long didactic poem—not by academic definition, but in the sense of lyrical beauty teaching a moral lesson and a principle of art. The lesson is that of a terrible loneliness that must come to a sensitive childhood despoiled by the

② WILLIAM MICHELFELDER, a first novelist himself, is the author of the recently published A Seed Upon the Wind. He is a staff writer for the New York World-Telegram and Sun.

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evil of adults, or as Mr. Grubb says it so lyrically:

"Lord save little children! For each of them has his Preacher to hound him down the dark river of fear and tonguelessness and never-a-door. Each one is mute and alone because there is no word for a child's fear and no ear to heed it..."

The principle of art framed here for us to see is that no one can better tell the story of troubled childhood than the artist who has never ceased being a child. Down the corridor of time, Mr. Grubb listens to the echoes of his own boyhood as if they were returning footfalls growing louder.

In Mr. Grubb's tense, brooding and always exquisite distillation of the child's mind, the villain of his novel—the Preacher—stands for all evil grownups in this world against whom the little armies of childhood must fight the losing battle and thus learn to grow up. The Night of the Hunter is an absorbing and occasionally melodramatic enlargement of this theme, bristling with murder, hate and the relentless chase; but in spite of all this, it is a novel which never loses its haunting loveliness.

Around the neck of each of two small children, like a dreadful millstone, hangs the heavy secret of their father's crime, long after he has been sent to the gallows for murder and bank robbery. He had sworn them to silence, even with their mother, from revealing that his stolen \$10,000 had been stuffed inside the rag doll carried around all day by his own daughter.

Then Harry Powell, a Jesus-loving psychopath who occupied the prison bunk directly above their dead father's, comes into the lives of the nine-year-old boy and the five-year-old girl. Having failed to wrest the name of the hiding place of the money from Ben Harper before he was executed, Powell sensed, with a kind of demented evangelism, that Harper loved his children as if they were human deities and that it was probably to them that the hiding place of the money was entrusted.

And so began the long night of the hunter and of the little ones he hunted. Young John instinctively knows, with the arrival of the money-crazed and demoniacal Powell, that evil has come into his short life for the first time. To impart this warning to his sister Pearl, clutching the doll-prize to her bosom, and to his own mother becomes for the boy a staggering experience that would overwhelm most adults. He sees to his dismay that he is not only older than his sister, but older and more perceptive of evil than the grownups—even his mother. All of this leads to murder and violence and the flight of the children across the valley of the Ohio River, their malevolent pursuer always at their heels reaching for the doll.

While the suspense is masterfully done, it is Mr. Grubb's knowingness of the secret ways of children, his uncanny feelings for the West Virginia land and its people which give the suspense a poetic breathlessness.

Seldom does Mr. Grubb falter as he unerringly translates the pure wonder, the pure magic, the faultless perception of the child's mind armed with its own devastating innocence. Mr. Grubb's writing has a swift and dark-running mysticism, like the strange song of the Ohio River heard by the children of his own story.

The adults, good and bad, are the real children of this fine novel—backward children, seen as old and ugly dwarfs in the bright illumination of John Harper's nine-year-old mind. And beyond lies the steady flame, the true incandescence of the talented novelist at work.

## American History in Miniature

THE OLD COUNTRY STORE. By Gerald Carson. Illustrated. New York: Oxford University Press. 330 pp. \$5.00.

#### Reviewed by DeLancey Ferguson

The old-time general store was an American folkway; it has become a part of American folklore. It began as the frontier trading post, when frontier and tidewater were

O DELANCEY FERGUSON is chairman of the department of English at Brooklyn College. His principal books are *Pride and Passion: Robert Burns; Mark Twain: Man and Legend;* and Letters of Robert Burns.



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close together; it flourished throughout the first century of our national existence; it declined when the automobile abolished distance as distance had been felt in horse-andwagon days. Mr. Carson holds that it is now extinct, which is true in a sense, though in hundreds of small communities in New England the locally owned and operated grocery is something far more than the "convenience store" which Mr. Carson calls it.

The general store was called into being by the unique conditions of American life. Communities of independent subsistence farmers needed a middleman from whom they could obtain the tools and supplies which they could not make or grow; they needed a market for the surplus produce which they could not themselves transport to the big centers. "Old records show that the country trader could cut hair, dig a grave, take a hand at sawing out hemlock boards, or run up a suit of clothes. In a society without stratification and without specialists, the merchant did what he could put his hand to profitably. . . ." He was local credit manager as well, and many of his customers settled their bills only once a year, if then. But the customers were independent farmers, not peons or sharecroppers. If they did not pay, the merchant might take them to court, but he lacked the absolute power of the "company store" in mining towns. Hence, if he were to avoid bankruptcy, he had to temper his acquisitiveness with a modicum of fair-dealing.

In such a history as this, complete generalization is impossible. What was true in Ohio in 1810 was not necessarily true in Vermont in 1890; nevertheless, the history of the country store is the economic history of America in miniature, from the days when potash and whisky were almost the only portable cash products of backwoods farms, to the days when Peruna and Wine of Cardui gave good church-members the pleasures of alcoholic stimulation without the sin. That checkered history Mr. Carson traces, with detail drawn from wide research: "The text of this book is based on unpublished journals and ledgers and other store records; on contemporary printed sources, almanacs, diaries, newspapers, trade journals, mail-order catalogues, trade cards, and odds and ends of advertising ephemera; on local histories, publications of historical and folklore societies, and the research of some modern authorities on business history." But he handles his knowledge lightly: statistics are held to a minimum and the human side of the narrative kept foremost. Only once or twice—notably in the chapter on the charms and snares of New York as they beset a country buyer in the 1850's—do the notebooks get the upper hand. The result is a mellow, nostalgic book, a social as well as an economic history.

Socially, the general store combined the functions of the Athenian agora and the British pub, with the important difference that the housewife made her presence and opinions felt in the store as she was never able to do in the other institutions. The store focused the working-day life of the community, as the churches of colonial New England had focused the religious and political life. Hence it focused also the folklore—the proverbs, the anecdotes of horse-trading, the tall tales. To this folklore Mr. Carson rightly gives generous space.

Much of it is admittedly traditional. The same story was told in dozens of places, and given local color by inserting the names of neighborhood characters. As Mr. Carson tells it, it was Hiram J. Bissell of Salisbury, Connecticut, who advised the customer with a stolen codfish under his coat either to wear a longer coat or steal a shorter fish, but the tale is told in other places. (And the Oxford Press ought not to have allowed a dried codfish to become "fried.") So, too, Mr. Carson has it that it was a Mr. Way of Hardwick, Vermont, who happened to have a church pulpit in stock when a joker asked for one. But that tale has been heard, with equal authority, in Sheffield, Massachusetts, and Lime Rock, Connecticut. A good story is at home anywhere.

Physically, the old country store may be extinct; spiritually, it is still alive. It was antiseptic to snobbishness and pomposity; and small communities, America over, are still the places where stuffed shirts have the most difficulty in staying inflated. Stephen Benét was not the first American artist, and

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he will not be the last, to draw courage and release of spirit from

"The echo of unkempt and drawling mirth

The lounging mirth of cracker-barrel
men.

Snowed in by winter, spitting at the fire, And telling the disreputable truth

With the sad eye that marks the perfect liar..."

## **Brief Comments**

GOD'S COUNTRY AND MINE: A Declaration of Love Spiced with a Few Harsh Words. By Jacques Barzun. Atlantic-Little, Brown. \$5.00.

French by birth but American since boyhood, Mr. Barzun is no mere foreigner giving us the supercilious once-over. When he says "God's country" he means it, and the criticisms he has to make presuppose that fact. What he says, with much shrewdness and much wit, is that all the disadvantages of living by "the American way" are consequences of the democratic ideals and the economic egalitarianism which the machine has made possible. The real question is only whether and to what extent they are inevitable consequences. It is not likely that we will give up either democratic government or technology; we shouldn't and we wouldn't. But he argues very eloquently both for some of the things we have lost and for the belief that we could regain many of them if we really wanted to. Though the subject is a familiar one, Mr. Barzun brings a great deal of freshness to it.

COMPANY MANNERS: A Cultural Inquiry into American Life. By Louis Kronenberger. Bobbs-Merrill. \$3.00.

In entering this plea for moderation and sensibility, Mr. Kronenberger trains a number of small, well-polished mirrors on the urban middle and upper-middle classes of the professional and intellectual world. There will be a few shouts of "We couldn't possibly look like that!" but it is more likely that the general reception will be a

silent one, punctuated occasionally by a nervous giggle.

The author is to be congratulated for not collapsing under the weight of his subtitle; for evaluating only those areas and groups with which he is acquainted; and for concluding with his own "Last Thoughts," rather than a pompous advice-to-the-lost chapter.

MAN'S UNCONQUERABLE MIND. By Gilbert Highet. Columbia. \$2.75.

In its bicentennial celebrations, Columbia University is proudly asserting the right of man to the free play of his intellectual powers. Gilbert Highet, Anthon Professor of Latin Language and Literature, contributes to the anniversary publications an essay containing his own formulation of this faith. With the consummate skill of the scholar turned artist, he successively examines the "Powers" and "Limits" of knowledge. He does not attempt a philosophic treatise, but delivers a lively eulogy. "Unconquerable" he deems the mind, an "inexhaustible miracle." He concludes with a "Dedication" of the essay and himself to the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.

BUT WE WERE BORN FREE. By Elmer Davis. Bobbs-Merrill. \$2.75.

Through these six essays sounds the sane, measured voice of an angry, old-fashioned American. Elmer Davis sees the Constitution, especially the Bill of Rights, under organized attack by those who exploit legitimate fear of communism in the interest of personal power. The exploiters' real enemy, he says, documenting as he goes, is not communism but the independent thinker; their strategy is his intimidation through slander. hatred, censorship; the defense against them can only be a return to the fearless nonconformism through which American freedom was born. By turns ironic, hortatory, objective, Mr. Davis fires his heaviest guns in the long opening essay, "Through the Perilous Night." Elsewhere, he argues for interpretive rather than merely factual news reporting; analyzes the "doublethink" of investigating committees; relates tinkering BOOKS
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with the Constitution to the attack on popular government.

ON EDUCATION AND FREEDOM. By Harold Taylor. Abelard-Schuman. \$3.50.

The president of Sarah Lawrence College is an adroit and at least relatively persuasive advocate of the open-door policy in higher education. It is, perhaps, easier to define the door than what it leads to. Essentially the program outlined is an extension into higher education of the Progressive School Movement. The appeal is no doubt strongest when the young people assembled are interested primarily in the creative arts or in doing what they please intellectually. The dissenter will ask how many noses are rubbed on grindstones. But unquestionably the book is the most interesting available exposition of the educational views it expounds.

SCENES AND PORTRAITS: Memories of Childhood and Youth. By Van Wyck Brooks. Dutton. §4.50.

Mr. Brooks's account of his life up to the years of his first achievement in criticism is a work of the greatest charm and interest. Plainfield, New Jersey, the town in which he was born and brought up, may have been, as he calls it, "a suburb of Wall Street," but it was also by way of being a suburb of Concord, Florence, Paris-so haunted by culture, or at least by the memories and dreams of culture, that the young Brooks at the age of thirteen was irrevocably committed to the life of art and the career of a critic. The reminiscence of Plainfield comprises the larger part of the book, but the chapters on Harvard and on New York in the days when John Butler Yeats held forth at Petitpas' Restaurant are no less interesting, and the whole book constitutes a document of the first importance for the history of American culture.

THE SECOND TREE FROM THE CORNER. By E. B. White. *Harper*. \$3.00.

This volume is composed of articles, verses, fancies, prefaces and various oddments from *The New Yorker*. Uneven in quality, they are all suffused with E. B. White's particular tone—the tone of melancholy that appears even in his funniest writings. But Mr. White's capacity for melancholy is matched by his capacity for indignation, particularly as directed at any kind of phony or demagogue or pedant or officious bureaucrat. High spots of this volume are "Song of the Queen Bee," "Afternoon of an American Boy" and "Death of a Pig."

THE MANNER IS ORDINARY. By John La Farge, S. J. Harcourt, Brace. \$4.75.

Father La Farge, to paraphrase Goldsmith, has touched nothing he has not humanized and sanctified. Considered as autobiography, his book is a masterpiece of understatement. Read as a commentary on people met and tasks undertaken, it is beguiling, revealing and edifying in the best sense. Of special moment are the accounts · of American society at the turn of the century; of progress in the field of interracial justice; and of European life from the time of stability, through war and tyranny, to the present uneasy period of reconstruction. Memorable also are anecdotes, fresh and good, about John La Farge, Sr., Henry James and many others.

THE PROPHET ARMED: Trotsky, 1879-1921. By Isaac Deutscher. Oxford. \$6.00.

In this scholarly and sensitive study, Trotsky emerges as the hero of the Russian Revolution, the prophet who realized his vision of it by inflaming men's minds, and who preserved it by coercing their bodies. This first part of a two-volume biography deals with Trotsky's career till 1921; it shows how his imagination, intellect and will responded to and relentlessly shaped the historical forces which finally culminated in the Bolshevik triumph.

The book has a hero, an emerging villain—Stalin, and a thesis which insists that Trotsky's life described a classical tragedy. The thesis, however, tends to blur the great, perhaps unanswerable questions. Trotsky was more than a pawn of some irresistible world-spirit; to plot, lead and pervert a



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revolution, despite one's own forebodings of ultimate distortion and defeat in victory, is to assume a terrible responsibility.

THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA. By Sarah Gertrude Millin. Knopf. \$4.50.

This third revision of Mrs. Millin's history of South Africa, which first appeared in 1926 and again in 1934, is a definitive source book. Eloquent in her writing but factual in her approach, she makes no impassioned plea for the Afrikaners, the English, Indians, Coloureds, Bastaards, Kaffirs —the list is almost endless—who now find themselves involved in one of the most critical confusions of racism. Mrs. Millin reports the historical facts, observes the results, but offers no pat formulas of solution. Her concluding battery of questions and ideas is so provocative that many readers will be motivated to explore further the growing body of literature on the subject.

RUM JUNGLE. By Alan Moorehead. Illustrated. Scribner's. \$3.50.

Journalist Alan Moorehead's exploration of the vast central and northern wilderness of his native Australia is charged with the emotional impact of a homecoming. Although he knows Australia intimately and describes it with perception, sympathy and humor, it is perhaps essentially a mystery, an isolated enigma: a weird jumble of coral reef, desert and jungle; of resort hotel, railroad and beachcomber; of gold mine, cattle ranch and naked bushman. The cockatoo, the emu and the wallaby, the koala and the kangaroo watch the rockets of Woomera and the uranium mines of Rum Jungle from the eternal bush. Here have come together "the infinitely primitive past and the infinitely fantastic future."

SEVEN YEARS IN TIBET. By Heinrich Harrer. Translated from the German by Richard Graves. Introduction by Peter Fleming. Illustrated. *Dutton.* \$5.00.

It was inevitable that Shangri-La would someday be revisited in nonfiction. In this remarkable tale of escape and peril, the author traces his hazardous progress from wartime internment in India to the Lhasa palace of the Dalai Lama. His account of Tibetan life, well illustrated with his own photographs, vividly reveals this land of prayer wheels, gold-roofed monasteries and butter lamps.

As Tibet is now "forbidden" by more than natural barriers, this is probably the last intimate profile of the young God-King and his people "whose will to live in peace and freedom has won so little sympathy from an indifferent world."

DOMENICO SCARLATTI. By Ralph Kirk-patrick. Illustrated. Princeton. \$10.00.

Twelve years of travel, detective work and library study, added to more than double that time of devotion to Scarlatti's music, have produced the most authoritative, exhaustive and conscientiously documented study of the eighteenth-century master available in any language. The biographical section, less than half the volume, though it corrects earlier lives and adds new facts, remains disappointingly meager.

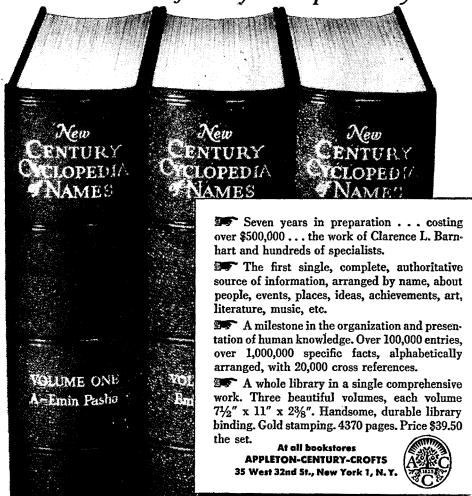
The balance of the book is devoted to a thorough and conscientious study of the sonatas and the instrument they were intended for. Coming from Mr. Kirkpatrick, one of the two or three finest harpsichordists of our day, these chapters should be absolutely indispensable to any intellectually honest performer of the sonatas and highly useful to any serious student of eighteenth-century music.

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This selection of letters from the voluminous correspondence of Gustave Flaubert spans his lifetime and includes his correspondence with George Sand, Turgenev and Guy de Maupassant as well as with his family, mistress and other friends. It was in his correspondence that Flaubert gave voice to the personal passions and convictions which his ideal of artistic objectivity forbade him to express in his novels. These letters record the evolvement of his theory of art, his labor pains in the creation of Madame Bovary, his deep concern over the social, literary and political upheavals of the times and the personal tragedies he suffered. Through them emerges the extraordinary nature of this literary ascetic.

THE GENTLEMAN OF RENAISSANCE FRANCE. By William Leon Wiley. Illustrated. *Harvard.* \$5.00.

Professor Wiley draws a vivid portrait of the gentleman, or nobleman rather, who succeeded the medieval knight. From king to provincial gentilhomme, we see him here in his daily life, at court or in château, at war or in tourney, dueling, hunting, dying, all described in rich contemporary detail. In real life the nobleman often lived up to the ideal of Castiglione's Courtier, though Italians thought the French lacked polish; but a Bayard or a Ronsard would compensate. We do not learn if the vigorous and splendid nobleman was worth his keep, since the book does not consider his service to society as soldier, ruler or farmer; but his private life makes a colorful tapestry.

THE FINER TONE: Keats' Major Poems. By Earl R. Wasserman. Johns Hopkins. \$4.00.

JOHN KEATS: The Living Year. By Robert Gittings. Harvard. \$3.50.

In the foreword to his admirable study, Dr. Wasserman says, "I have limited myself to five poems because they are the only major poems by Keats that I have learned to read to my own satisfaction." This remark, which would have astonished a lover of Keats up to thirty years ago, will indicate the assumption which underlies the work of the best modern scholars and critics of Keats, for whom Keats is not, as he was once thought to be, a poet primarily of surfaces, but a poet of depths—a profound poet and a difficult one.

Dr. Wasserman undertakes to set forth his understanding of the five poems in the explicatory manner which is identified with the so-called New Critics. But he does not subscribe to the New Critical dogma that a poem may be studied only in its text—his critical method takes free and happy license to bring to bear upon the text any matter that scholarship has made available to him.

Mr. Gittings' book is the perfect complement to Dr. Wasserman's. Its method is that of scholarly research based upon a very precise reading of the poems and having in view a still more precise reading. Mr. Gittings investigates in great detail the circumstances of Keats's life during the year of his greatest production, 1819, in the belief that actuality may be made to shed light upon whole poems and particular passages. In this belief Mr. Gittings is eminently justified. Inevitably the particular result of his researches which will be thought the most striking is his having established the identity of the "lady of Hastings." Keats's mysterious references to this attractive person have never sufficiently piqued the curiosity of biographers, and Amy Lowell was skeptical of her existence. What Mr. Gittings tells us of the actuality of Mrs. Isabella Jones, of her temperament, and of the poet's relation to her goes far toward explaining certain of the erotic elements of Keats's greatest poems.

BEYOND CRITICISM. By Karl Shapiro. Nebraska. \$3.00.

In three essays the author pleads for "an atmosphere of neutrality," dominated neither by Culture nor History, in which the poet may create freely. But he has his own axes to grind: "The artist like Picasso declares war on the world and especially on

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the world of his medium...." And he often lapses into jargon, as when we are told that in Shakespeare and Mozart "ego and time-consciousness are practically non-existent." Mr. Shapiro argues that a poem must be sincere, and states that "personal experience plus obedience to the laws of beauty... is the equation for the creative act." Books by poets about poetry are famously inconclusive, and this is no exception.

THE DESERT MUSIC AND OTHER POEMS. By William Carlos Williams. Random. \$3.00.

The early poems of William Carlos Williams often seemed skeletal, with images—a wheelbarrow glazed with rain, leaves "clashing" in the wind—which, in their very nakedness, were an angry protest. In Paterson there was a ground swell of feelings, a glimpse of depth, under a fragmented surface. Now in The Desert Music the poet celebrates "the female principle," flowers and stars. After so long a reticence and so many exceptions taken, Dr. Williams seems to agree with Rilke that there is no defense but defenselessness, and the result is some of the finest lyric verse of our time.

THE PONDER HEART. By Eudora Welty. Illustrated. Harcourt, Brace. \$3.00.

It is just as well that Miss Welty has to state at the outset that "The towns of Clay and Polk [Mississippi] are fictitious, and their inhabitants and situations products of the author's imagination, not intended to portray real people or real situations"; no one would believe it at the end of the book.

Heaven and the critics will have to help anyone who wanders through these 156 pages in search of symbolism. But the real difficulty in appraising the strengths and weaknesses of the Ponder family will come to the reader who thinks he can laugh harder and longer than the author.

THE HORSEMAN ON THE ROOF. By Jean Giono. Translated by Jonathan Griffin. Knopf. \$4.00.

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THE COBWEB. By William Gibson. Knopf. \$3.95.

Mr. Gibson begins his first and last chapters with "The trouble about the living-room drapes . . " and window decorations have never served a better purpose than in the framework of this account of the occupants of Castle House Clinic for Nervous Disorders. Although the author gives greater attention to the staff than to the patients, this is no *Snake Pit* in reverse. At every turn—and the story is labyrinthine—clipped dialogue and swift passages of insight and description allow the reader to identify with almost all the characters.

Mr. Gibson is to be congratulated for not having employed his obvious knowledge of psychotherapy and its idiom as short cuts to characterization and action.

CRESS DELAHANTY. By Jessamyn West. Harcourt, Brace. \$3.75.

A girl's growing pains are the painless subject of this pleasurable novel. It could easily deteriorate into a fluttery sentimentality, but Miss West's sure hand holds it all steady from start to finish, from Cress aged twelve until she enters college. Mother can't believe her little girl is interested in boys, but Father knows better—he even sees a sign of budding love in the way Cress cracks the front teeth of a playmate named Edwin, and her own innocent comment betrays her: "You don't knock people down you are sorry for." Many authors have watched a boy grow older. Miss West does yeoman's service for the distaff side.

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## The Reader Replies...

THE READER REPLIES carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles which have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor, The AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Phi Beta Kappa Hall, Williamsburg, Va., and should not exceed 300 words in length except on request. Because of limitations of space, we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.—Editor.

## More About Freedom and Loyalty

Mr. Riesman's remarks to those who are alarmed by the attacks on civil liberties in America sound to me something like this: "I know you are being kicked around a bit, but it doesn't hurt much when you're used to it, really it doesn't. And besides, if you didn't scream so loudly, maybe they wouldn't kick you so hard." As advice, this is on a par with that of those eminent persons who tell us that if we don't keep still about rising unemployment we'll talk ourselves into a depression.

Mr. Riesman suggests that a certain amount of imperviousness to political alarms is healthy, and he is probably right, but it is hard to believe that apathy or indifference is the cure for what ails us now.

W. R. STEINHOFF Ann Arbor, Michigan ★ ★ ★

May I express my admiration for David Riesman's "Some Observations on Intellectual Freedom"? The essay brings new and brilliant light to that dreadfully complex subject, and The American Scholar is to be congratulated on having provided the occasion for its appearance. By illuminating some of the false presuppositions which impel so many intellectuals today, Mr. Riesman has performed a more important task than he would have by merely repeating routine attacks on the professional traducers. A penetrating diagnosis ought to be more welcome at this time than the most tender lament.

FRITZ STERN New York, New York

I have just reread Mr. Riesman's recent

article and want to make some comments that I have been thinking about ever since I first read it. There are, in my opinion, many wise and even profound remarks in the article. I say this not because of the prevailing American academic habit of praising before you criticize, but, quite simply, because I admire the article greatly. It saysprobably for the first time—what so desperately needs to be said: that many American intellectuals justify their cowardice by scare stories, that others behave bravely because they are afraid of being thought cowards, that still others (and these are my real bêtes noires) get a gleam in their eyes when they tell you the latest horror about Mc-Carthy—a tell-tale gleam that reveals the awful truth that they are thoroughly enjoying themselves.

All this the article says, and wonderfully well. And I wholeheartedly agree with the temper of as well as the overwhelming majority of statements in the article. But if it is useful to correct the attitude of Mr. MacLeish, I think that my much smaller dissent may be of some use as well. I feel that the article has the defect of failing to give adequate weight to the following considerations.

First, the scare stories are all Mr. Riesman says they are: they are masochistic, they partake of the self-fulfilling prophecy, they are often excuses. But they are also something else—they are, by and large, true. The sad fate of the intellectual at this or that college is not the scare story that worries me most. But what of the employees at Fort Monmouth, suspended without pay and without definite charges for months? What of the (apparently rather anti-intellectual) government employee mentioned in the *Reporter* story of March 2, 1954



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("Victim of Nameless Accusers," a dreadful title but still a shocking and depressing document)? The point must be made that injustices of this kind go on around us with great frequency, and the intellectual (even the non-Nation-reader, even the moderate who refuses to believe in the New Statesman's charges of the "Reign of Terror" in this country) who hears of such things should not remain silent or unconcerned. I do not have a prescription: to retail these stories may mean that we join the men who spread the very climate of fear that they are deploring. But is not the failure to tell them equally dangerous?

Second, the kind of intellectual conformity which Mr. Riesman so rightly deplores is not the sole property of the gloomy anti-McCarthyites. There are other groups, often writing for Commentary or the Partisan Review, who have made of professions of anti-Stalinism a kind of loyalty oath, and who take dissent from them on political issues as an indication that the dissenter is "objectively" (a hideous word!) a dupe of Stalinism. There may be some such dupes left, and some of them, I take it, may write for the Nation, but what happens to the intellectual who, let us say, still is not satisfied that the Smith Act is constitutional. still thinks poorly of Franco, still dislikes the whole loyalty program as it is now being carried out? I happen to hold all these views, and I feel sure that some intellectuals whom both Mr. Riesman and I know would call me "naive"-if not worse-for holding them.

Thirdly, there is in the air an apologetic conservatism that has gone much further than it should to deserve the name "healthy reaction." To be sure, we had to free ourselves from the Populism of a Parrington, and from some of the vulgarities implicit in any conspiracy theory of history—even the theory of capitalist conspiracy. But we have now reached a state of affairs in which threadbare apologies like Russell Kirk's The Conservative Mind are called "splendid" in scholarly journals, and in which any concern with the economic basis of politics, or with ideology, is decried as leftwing or fellow-traveling.

I mention the second and third points because they suggest to me that the problem of the American intellectual is even more deep-seated than Mr. Riesman's article suggests. Many in our fraternity have a deep feeling of guilt about the days in which they had no enemies to the left, and they are now desperately trying to re-establish their reputations by embracing conservatism, by imposing conformity, and by nervously deploring dissent.

But these criticisms aside, I agree with Mr. Riesman that after all is said, the intellectual stands alone with his convictions, and that he must have the courage to be unpopular—even with fellow-intellectuals.

PETER GAY
Columbia University
New York, New York

Postscript:

In "Values in Context" [AS: Winter, 1952-53], I tried to set forth some of the complexities and ironies that arise when what one says to challenge one audience misfires either with that audience or with another, unintended one; I observed that these problems were inevitable in a heterogeneous society like ours, since one could neither say everything to everyone at once nor be wholly sure of maintaining a restricted audience. Some of these ambiguities of communication have been driven home to me once again by the reception of my recent article, "Some Observations on Intellectual Freedom" [AS: Winter, 1953-54].

For instance, when I drew on this article for a lecture at Mills College in October, 1953, I was sharply criticized from the floor by Professor Laurence Sears of Mills; he chided me for lack of passionate concern for intellectual freedom and for allegedly minimizing the damage done liberals by Senator McCarthy. I had expected such reactions as part of the give-and-take of academic discourse, and had even hoped for them to help clarify the available spectrum of positions for the Mills College students. However, while I had refused to allow the broadcast or televising of the talk, the "attack" by Professor Sears drew the attention of the local papers, and our "The combination of folk-simplicity and thoughtfulness of outlook is unusual and delightful."—DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER

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differences were reported in a distorted fashion, especially by the Hearst press. I had not expected to be overheard by reactionary editors: to tell them the "same" things I was telling liberal Mills faculty and students and their friends would, if conceivable at all, have required an altered approach, and for them I would have emphasized the marginal and intra-academic nature of the disagreements between Professor Sears (or Archibald MacLeish) and myself. But of course one irony inside this irony is that it is very difficult to get across to people without academic training any such dialectical intentions: such people want to know whether something is so or isn't so, and can't see any harm in broadcasting a debate even if all it does is to encourage them to feel smug or even vindictive about professors. (Time, however, which to my dismay picked up the story from the Bay area, did understand this point and strove to present a conscientious account.) At the same time, as my article declares, I have never been willing to accept the "don't wash dirty linen" position, which implies that a group under attack must stop talking unless all exits are sealed. If we are not to succumb to overwhelming "inside" pressures, we have to take a good many chances, and will have to go on making mistakes.

Even so, I must add that when I wrote this article (in the spring and early summer of 1953), I did so with a good deal of misgiving lest it comfort those intellectuals, rather rare in my own circles but no doubt plentiful, who might take it as an excuse not to worry. At times, even the most intrepid among us may secretly long for excuses for inaction, and I was aware that, in criticizing the panic doctrine that America is on the road to fascism (my opinion in part based on the none too hopeful ground that we have always had illegality and violence in this country), I might leave some readers even more smug than before. I now think that I did not pay sufficient heed to my own misgivings, for some reactions favorable to my article have had this smug quality; on rereading what I wrote, I feel I should have emphasized more some of the impalpable erosions of intellectual freedom that are related both to the general pressures hostile to individualism and to the specific tensions and irritabilities of the cold war.

Certainly, since my article was written, I have encountered painfully little evidence of the willingness of American intellectuals, let alone businessmen, lawyers, broadcasters, and government officials, to come out swinging in the old free-hand way, not only against McCarthy but against the careful, excessively fine-spun arguments of many of those whom McCarthy has attacked: the latter, if innocent of Communist ties, are often deferential and conciliatory, neither expressing firmness and conviction nor making use of the traditional American pattern of political vilification for one's own protection. What is involved here is perhaps not so much the rational fear of people for their careers; rather, people fear public embroilment with a bully, which can become an unbelievably harassing full-time job. Many of us can recall, or prefer not to recall, our dismal encounters with bullies in high school or earlier; being Americans, unprotected by arrogance of class or family, we could not be sure we were in the right if we lost or ran away from such a fight. Thus, in dealing with a demagogue, we often lack assurance and are unprepared for virulence and bad faith; at times, we fall back on argumentative weapons deemed weak by a sports-loving public. And this weakness would seem especially grave when one is dealing with Senator McCarthy, whose sales-appeal to the newly well-paid but socially uneasy strata in his constituency is as much his outspoken contempt for all symbols (such as Harvard, England, the State Department, or Army brass) of older and better educated strata, as is his opportunistic and picayune domestic anti-communism.

Moreover, I sense among many members of the intellectual community an understandable tendency to establish our patriotism, our incontrovertible loyalty and anticommunism, as a kind of public-relations gesture. And we are likely to argue that we are better fighters against communism at home and abroad than McCarthy or

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Counter-Attack. These declarations are true, yet they have an air of enforced piety about them, like the declarations of some comicbook and pocket-book publishers who, instead of ridiculing the hypocrisy and denouncing the unfairness and contempt for freedom of the Gathings Committee, proclaim their own desire to avoid "obscenity" in cover and content. The fact that we feel such politic declarations must be made, that we cannot have our virtue (or the viciousness of our critics) taken for granted, is a sign of the increasing pressure against freedom that I think now I did not take sufficiently into account in my article.

DAVID RIESMAN Johns Hopkins University Baltimore, Maryland

#### Dilemma of "Man for Himself"

In "The Cardinal Virtues" [AS: Winter, 1953-54], Max Eastman runs squarely into the dilemma facing every advocate of "man for himself." Every writer concerned with the development of a scientific morality, emphasizing the development of the unique potentialities of the individual, must bridge the gap between the individual and his human environment. By stating that the virtue of imaginative sympathy is necessary for an individual's personal development, Mr. Eastman attempts to bring Christian charity into the orbit of autonomous selfhood. The rationale for this synthesis is not convincing. He bases his argument on man's gregarious nature and his need for fellowship necessitated by "multiplicity and the orphaned condition of man." It is one thing, however, to speak of the socializing process of internalizing the experience of others and quite another to state that "taking thought of others is a great joy." The virtuous man's response to the social environment is not determined by the awareness of the experience of others any more than the criminal's behavior results from an inability to internalize other roles.

The "orphaned condition of man" might bring men together in an attempt to overcome their isolation and sense of meaninglessness. However, any motive growing out of weakness and personal deficiency leads not to a spontaneous sympathy and love for other men but almost inevitably to an attempt to overcome collectively this deficiency. Human fellowship is gained in this venture but always at the expense of an out-group, which provides the necessary opposition for social cohesion.

Modern man has yet to come up with a social ethic, surpassing the Christian, which will re-establish the primary bonds of folk societies, much less a morality providing for that disinterested sympathy necessary for any permanent solution of his dilemma.

WILLIAM H. STRAIN Princeton University Princeton, New Jersey

#### Tawdry Tawdle?

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR came today. I always open the wrapping with impatience; for I have enjoyed my subscription.

But unfortunately I began with the first article, "A Modest Proposal for the Care and Use of Subversives," by Alan Valentine [AS: Spring, 1954]. A feeling of disgust enveloped me before the first paragraph was finished. I too have read Swift, and found this so totally unoriginal that I could almost anticipate each new sentence. I don't believe something like this belongs in our magazine. It isn't independent thoughtit's tawdry tawdle. Now it is fashionable for intellectuals to denounce the Wisconsin -Senator. All right, I agree he is more harmful to our country than any proved Communist. But this article is no decent attack; it is cheap.

Having just finished But We Were Born Free, by Elmer Davis, I think I know how an irate man, with deep faith in our country, would write. He does not have the ponderous style of Mr. Valentine, but he has a quality of honesty which excuses his rather unliterary technique.

I've read things in The American Scholar which I have not always understood and with which I have not agreed, but never before something which nauseated me with its transparent stealing of ideas and vulgar presentation.

Before long I shall join my husband in Japan for duty at an isolated service base. I expected to take The American Scholar with me as a breath of intelligence and the scholarly atmosphere of home. I hope there won't be more articles like these to make me ashamed of my gold key.

Elinor Noble Martinez
Canaan, Connecticut

#### The Future of Books

The American Scholar Forum on "The Future of Books in America" was an interesting reflection of the points of view of authors, publishers, critics and librarians; and I am sure it will provide invaluable material for future historians of our culture. What I missed in the discussion was adequate recognition of the enthusiastic new book-reading public, the habits of whom are becoming fixed on the basis of more and better books being made available within reach of every taste and every purse. Our experience during the current overproduction of inexpensive paper-bound editions reveals that the finest books, nonfiction as well as fiction, are doing well-the ordinary books, the mediocre books are creating most of the unsold inventory. Whatever the future pattern of publishing, millions of readers have become accustomed to good literature at a low price, and, above all, conveniently on sale near home or job. When this sort of demand exists, the ingenious and independent American publisher, despite the disappointment of a bad season, will find a method of reaching the ever-growing book audience at a profit.

VICTOR WEYBRIGHT Chairman and Editor New American Library New York, New York

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The recent Forum on "The Future of Books in America" [AS: Spring, 1954] was extraordinarily timely, revealing—and saddening. The discerning reader gains at least four impressions that stand out like Mars at perihelion. First, it appears certain that the spate of soft-cover books slowly is supplanting the pulp magazines, many of them

pervertingly trashy. No decent mind can frown on this symptom. Second, it is beyond question that during the past decade, millions who previously seldom, if ever, read books have acquired the book-reading habit. Is it unreasonable to hope that the habit qua habit—ultimately may lead the masses progressively to wiser selections? Third, it seems beyond question that the United States is registering a genuine cultural lag. Mediocrity is rampant. Standards are faltering, or falling: Tastes are strongly adulterated. Subtly and enticingly sex is exploited, not only in print, but by radio, the movies and television. Materialism is the reigning practical philosophy; and the arbiters, the censores morum, are confused and uncertain about remedial measures, for the plain reason that the public is avid for the sensational and salacious. Fourth, admittedly the book-printing industry is sick, in some quarters very sick; and while no one expects it will succumb, the prospect for the indeterminate future is not pleasing. Inasmuch as

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all participants admit that too many books are being printed and since the publishers are specifically responsible for this, may not one aptly venture the classic "Physician, heal thyself"?

LABAN LACY RICE Gulfport, Florida can have no "pure" biographies of such men as Hitler, Stalin and Attila? The caution that Mr. Nicolson advocates in choosing subjects for biographies would seem to leave the field of Hitler biographies to the Nazis and Stalin ones to the Communists. That strikes me as playing with fire.

> Bernard Sinsheimer Hollywood, California

#### In Appreciation

In the dozen years during which I have subscribed to The American Scholar I have enjoyed many of your issues, but perhaps none has ever matched the fine Spring '54 issue. I found all of the articles highly interesting.

I appreciate the fact that Frederick F. Manfred is probably a very modest man, yet curiosity impels me to wonder if he will not let us know what were the "three words" which Sinclair Lewis wrote in his book for Mr. Manfred.

Mr. Nicolson's remarks about biography struck me as being most valuable, with one exception. He says that a "pure" biography can only be written about a person whom the writer respects. Does that mean that we Just a note to tell you how stimulating and enjoyable the Winter, 1953-54 issue of The American Scholar was to me. Your usual high standards found themselves humbled by this issue.

Who could ask for more poetry than "Alaskan Summer," by Fraser Darling; more humor than "The Solemn Style of Modern Critics," by Wallace Douglas; more thought-provoking articles than "The Loud-Voiced Victory," by David Cort, and "The Cardinal Virtues," by Max Eastman? And the poetry was stimulating, too.

In short, thanks for two pleasant evenings!

RICHARD L. BOWEN Sacramento, California

A businessman looks at ethics and social philosophy

## In Quest of a New Ethics

By CHARLES MAYER

BUILDING on a naturalistic basis, this eminent French biochemist, humanist, and man of letters presents his own solidly realistic view of the ethical problems of today's world. He believes in progress, in enlightened self interest, in free competition; and it is within this framework that he believes altruism and rational ethics have their place. He rejects the idea that all men are equal and is strongly opposed to the "coddling of the weak and inefficient," economic planning, the Welfare State. But he insists that opportunity must be equal, that progress can be made only by free individuals, not by regimented societies.

This is a stimulating, sometimes provoking book from which philosophers and businessmen alike can profit.

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VOLUME 23

Autumn, 1954

NUMBER 4

### Irwin Edman

When a true voice is stilled, one little relishes chirping in its place—even in tribute. And so, wanting somehow to express here our sense of loss and our thanks to Irwin Edman, I turned to his own words, written a few short weeks before his death and printed in this issue in the department called *Under Whatever Sky*, which has been his in every number since its inception in the Spring of 1945.

And there I found (as you will find), to my surprise, intimations of what has happened. Nothing could be more inappropriate, in writing of that dry, bubbling intelligence, spring of wit and irony and true sensibility, than to attribute to it sentimental forebodings, mystical or intuitive apprehensions of a morbid kind. Nor do I mean anything of the sort—but rather simply that in these pages you will find allusions and references to death that suggest, at the least, that he had turned his face in that direction and fixed there his clear, perceptive gaze.

He writes of first things and last, first times and last, and says how seldom one realizes at such occasions their significance: "Nor, as a matter of fact, with respect to either personal or public events, does one often remotely know that this is the end. One leaves a friend in perfect health and the next day one hears he is dead." And a little farther on in his column, he quotes Edna St. Vincent Millay's address to Persephone over a friend who has just died:

Say to her, "My dear, my dear, It is not so dreadful here."

When I turn back to the very first column he wrote for The American Scholar, I read his endorsement of the feeling that "serenity can come only from seeing events in that light of eternity

which is commonly called philosophy." It is my simple conviction that Irwin Edman thought and lived in that light.

He was "a master of the ready word"; he loved and practiced the intellectual quip, the ironic twist, the epigram, the gay and charming turn of phrase. An apt parodist, with an extraordinary memory and the gift of the raconteur, he could often make a half-hour's monologue delightful. Yet, as he once wrote, "The true master can in a few words speak volumes"—and the quick but courteous retort, the brief gay sally, were equally characteristic of him.

Still, for some curious reason, many people assume that such a man, such a mind, may not be profound. I have heard professional philosophers and others drag in this tired comment, "Edman is light and popular; he is not a serious philosopher or scholar." This is a facile and, I think, foolish judgment. But a sour puritanical dislike of the lighthearted is a part (thank God, not a decisive part) of the Anglo-American heritage.

Only those who, like Irita Van Doren, have known him long and cherished him have the true measure, I believe. She writes, "He had the most extraordinary gift for making difficult and abstruse matters clear and simple to the layman." His writing, his teaching, his conversation—all illustrate this gift.

No true friend of Irwin Edman's can blink the fact that he was not, in the conventional sense, a devout or pious man. Yet I think of him as a genuinely religious man of a humanistic faith, and one who stood courageously by this faith in the face of whatever disapproval, opposition or danger.

Moreover, in this last installment of *Under Whatever Sky*, he concludes his account of first and last times with these words: "I have good authority for believing that in larger matters it is simply world without end." And therefore I feel, as it were, his amused blessing when I say that I am sure he will not need Persephone to comfort him. For fourteen years he sat among us, dispensing challenge, cheer and wisdom; and I more than half-believe that he sits now at a higher board, with Socrates and Voltaire and Montaigne, perhaps with his old loved masters, Santayana and Dewey. I think I can see them rise as he comes, and they are saying "Welcome."

Hiram Haydn

# Lord Melbourne and the Young Victoria

#### DAVID CECIL

In the middle of May, 1837, political circles in London were thrown into fresh agitation by an unforeseen event. King William IV fell dangerously ill. After several weeks hovering between life and death, he breathed his last in the early hours of June 20. At nine o'clock of the same morning the Prime Minister, in the fulldress uniform of a Privy Councillor, arrived at Kensington Palace to pay his respects to the new Queen. He was ushered into a small room, where he found himself alone in the presence of a roundcheeked, blue-eyed little figure dressed very plainly in deep mourning, who with an air at once childish and regal held out her hand for him to kiss. In artless words and a sweet, clear treble she told Melbourne that she wished him and his colleagues to continue in office, and then listened with attention while he read to her the speech he had written for her to make later in the morning to the Privy Council. He asked if she would like to be supported by the chief officers of her realm on entering the room at this her first public appearance as a sovereign. The Queen replied, at once and with composure, "No"; she preferred to come in alone. Melbourne then kissed her hand again and withdrew. A short time before the Council, he returned in case she wanted any further advice as to how to conduct herself at it. He need hardly have bothered. Once or twice the Queen was observed to look inquiringly at her Prime Minister as if in doubt what to do next; but, for the most part, she

© LORD DAVID CECIL, a great-great-great-nephew of Viscount Melbourne, is the author of *The Stricken Deer*, a life of Cowper; two books of criticism, *Early Victorian Novelists* and *Hardy the Novelist*; and *Two Quiet Lives*, short biographies of Thomas Gray and Dorothy Osborne. He is now Goldsmith Professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Oxford. This excerpt from *Melbourne*, copyright 1939, 1954, is used by special permission of the publishers, The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.

amazed all beholders by the modest and graceful self-possession with which, in the face of a large and august audience, she went through the stately ceremonies of her inauguration. After dinner that night Melbourne came back once more for an hour's leisurely talk with her. "I had a very important and very comfortable conversation with him," wrote the Queen in her diary that evening.

It was to be the first of many such. The eighteen-year-old Queen needed someone to instruct her as to how to conduct herself in her new and difficult role. In the ordinary way this would have been done by some responsible and experienced person appointed as confidential secretary for the purpose. It was not easy, however, to find the right man; for if he were intelligent enough for the work, he was likely to have ideas of his own about political affairs which might well conflict with those of the Government. The last thing Melbourne wanted was an independent power behind the throne. Nor did he intend, if he could help it, that the new monarch should be as hostile to the Government as the old had been. All these considerations made him decide to take on the secretary's work himself. This meant that he saw the Queen constantly. He visited her at least twice a day: she saw him alone in her own private sitting room where she received no other visitor. They communicated also by letter; he wrote to her and she wrote to him sometimes as often as three times a day. Three or four times a week, at least, he dined. Whoever the guests might be, Melbourne sat on the Queen's left, and after dinner she spent most of her time talking to him. A month or two later she went to take up residence at Windsor. But this change did not mean any break in their association. Melbourne wrote as often as ever and at greater length. He also went down to stay. There, in addition to the daily conference and evening relaxation with each other, he would accompany her out riding. Altogether it can be calculated that in these first years of her reign, Melbourne spent four or five hours of every day talking or writing to his royal mistress. No doubt he felt it his duty to do so; but he was not the man to carry out a duty so rigorously if it went against his inclinations. As a matter of fact, all his inclinations were in its favor; what had begun as a duty very soon turned into an intense pleasure. These months saw the birth and quick maturing of the

#### LORD MELBOURNE AND THE YOUNG VICTORIA

most precious personal relationship that he had known since the first happy days of his marriage thirty-two years before.

It was a very different sort of relationship. For apart from their unlikeness in age and situation, the two women involved were so different. The young Queen's personality, however, was just as compelling as his wife's had been, and, in its own way, as exceptional. Not that she was complex or eccentric. On the contrary, her simple and formidable character was compounded of a few basic and universal elements. By nature she was almost all the things that the typical woman is alleged to be by those who have the temerity to generalize on the subject: instinctive, personal, unintellectual, partisan, interested in detail, viewing things in the concrete rather than the abstract, and with a profound natural reverence for the secure and the respectable. With these common qualities of her sex, the Queen possessed also those of her age. Like most of the eighteen-year-old girls who were her subjects, she was innocent and enthusiastic, enjoyed dancing and dress, set store by anniversaries and mementos and celebrations, blushed and burst out laughing, bubbled over with sentiment for her pet dog and her old home—and not in any particularly refined or rarefied way. Though regal, she was not aristocratic as the English understand the term. The healthy, homely German blood which coursed through her veins had imparted a commonplace, even a bourgeois tinge to her taste. But if her nature was normal, her character was not. It was too abnormally high-powered, for one thing. Her enjoyments were more rapturous than the average girl's, her sentimentality more unbridled, her interest in detail more inexhaustible, her partisanship more violent, her innocence more dewy. Some strain in her—once again it may have come from Germany—had endowed her with an extravagant force of temperament, so that the ordinary in her was magnified to a degree where it became extraordinary.

To this startling fervor of feeling she added a startling simplicity of vision. Through her childlike eyes she saw the world as naively, literally and absolutely as a child. All facts came fresh to her. "To hear the people speaking German and to see the German soldiers etc. seemed to me so singular," she notes a year or two later on her

first visit to Germany. Her judgments were as simple as her vision. They were often shrewd, but never subtle and never tentative. Her mind was incapable of entertaining a doubt or a half shade. Things were frivolous or serious, sad or cheerful, right or wrong-particularly right or wrong. Childish vision went along with a child's ruthless, unsleeping moralism, and its ruthless candor, too. As a little girl, it was noticed that, though rebellious and passionate, the Princess could always be trusted to be rigidly truthful. At eighteen she was just as incapable of simulating a feeling or telling a lie. As she spoke, so she acted. The most formidably extreme of all her extreme qualities was her strength of character. Here she was not childish, nor feminine—if indeed weakness be a feminine characteristic. No one was ever less the creature of whim or vacillating impulse. Once she had made up her mind what she ought to do, she adhered inflexibly to it, however hard it might be for her and whether other people liked it or not. It was not in her to compromise. If other people were wrong, it would be wrong of her to give in to them.

The peculiarities of her nature had been sharpened by the circumstances of her upbringing. Her mother, the Duchess of Kent, suspicious and jealous of her royal in-laws, was determined that her daughter should not fall under their influence. The result was that the Princess spent her childhood in a strange, conventual seclusion, almost entirely in the company of women-notably her mother and her governess, Baroness Lehzen-who regulated and supervised every hour of her day. She was never allowed to be alone; she slept in her mother's room; whenever she went up and down stairs, someone held her hand; if she kept a diary, it had always to be shown to Lehzen. Very few grown-up visitors came to the house; and except for the daughter of her mother's secretary, or on the rare occasions when her German cousins came to stay, she did not have the chance of playing with other children. No window on the ordinary, humdrum world was ever opened to let a whiff of fresh air into the soft, stifling atmosphere of meticulous feminine triviality and gushing feminine emotion which pervaded Kensington Palace.

But if her childhood was secluded, it was not obscure. As the

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future Queen of England, the Princess realized that she was a personage of unequaled importance and, as such, treated differently from other children. People did not bow and curtsy to other children; other children were not taught singing and dancing, as she was, by the most famous public performers in the world; other children were not prepared for confirmation by the Archbishop of Canterbury himself. And with the glory of great position she was early introduced to its troubles. Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown, says the poet; and the head destined for a crown is hardly more comfortable. For four years before her accession, the Princess was the center of a continuous turmoil of intrigue and conflict. There was the conflict between the King and her mother. The Duchess of Kent, a short, stout, foolish woman, rustling self-importantly about in velvet and ostrich plumes, was intoxicated by the idea of herself as mother to a future monarch, all the more because she considered she had never been treated by the English royal family with the respect due to her. Accordingly, at the same time that she strove to keep her daughter from them, she was always making efforts to bring her into prominence on her own; she demanded that the Fleet should fire a salute in her daughter's honor when she was at the seaside, and paraded her round the country on official visits without getting the King's permission. She also intrigued with disaffected politicians, notably Durham, with the vague idea of creating a sort of Princess' party in Parliament. The irascible William IV reacted violently against these proceedings of his sister-in-law. He forbade the Navy to fire a salute and incessantly abused the Duchess to his ministers. On one of the rare occasions when she paid him a visit, he suddenly rose at the end of dinner and denounced her to the company in unmeasured and naval terms for deliberately keeping his beloved niece from him. The poor little Princess burst into tears of embarrassment. Thus early was she aware of herself as a bone of contention.

The King was not the only person trying to get control over her. Her uncle Leopold, King of the Belgians, was a far-sighted statesman well aware of the political advantages of having a niece on the throne of powerful England. At his visits, therefore, and in a series

of letters in which political advice, pious aspirations and demonstrations of high-flown affection were artfully blended, he sought to get her under his influence. The Princess did not resent this, for Uncle Leopold was always tactful; but she realized that his views were not always the same as her mother's or her Uncle William's and that she must be careful how far she committed herself to them. This added another complication to the already complex situation in which she found herself.

There was a more disturbing complication to face nearer home. Life at Kensington Palace, to outward appearance so tranquil, was in reality a scene of strife. On the one side stood the Duchess and her confidential secretary, Sir John Conroy, an intriguing vulgarian who saw in his position the means to advancement. He had found the friendless Duchess an easy prey, and she soon became completely dominated by him. It was he who instigated her progresses and political démarches. Opposed to him was Baroness Lehzen, who rightly thought that his activities were not in the best interests of her royal charge. Her hostility was sharpened by the fact that Conroy together with the Duchess' maid of honor, Lady Flora Hastings, made fun of her German passion for caraway seeds. Friction between the two factions cooped up together in the segregated palace was continuous, and, though the occasions of dispute were trifling enough, they were the symptoms of a bitter animosity which poisoned the whole atmosphere the young Princess breathed.

Such an upbringing, at once so strictly regulated and so emotionally disturbed, would have crushed an ordinary girl. It served to reveal that the Princess was very far from ordinary, for her character only gained strength from the ordeal. All the same, it profoundly affected her. On the one hand, the fact that she was so cut off from the world increased her naïveté. On the other, consciousness of her royal position increased her innate self-confidence. She took for granted that it was her natural right to be obeyed. So far, education had served to intensify the qualities with which she was born. But it also curiously modified them. The quarrels and hidden plots of which she found herself the center undermined her sense of security, so that the spontaneous candor of her nature

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was checked and she became cautious and distrustful. Distrustful, too, of the person with whom a child should feel safest-of her own mother! For the Princess did not take the Duchess of Kent's side in her endless quarrels. William IV had been kind to her; now and again she complained violently that she was not allowed to see more of her uncle. About Conroy she felt even more strongly. Indeed, she actually hated him, and her hatred chilled any affection which she may have had for her mother. What made her feel so strongly on the subject is mysterious. Scandal had it that Conroy and the Duchess were lovers and that the Princess had discovered them in each other's arms. There is no certain evidence for this sensational story. What is more sure is that the Duchess and Conroy did plot to have the Princess' time for coming of age delayed so that, should William IV die while she was still in her teens, the Duchess might become Regent, with Conroy as the power behind the throne. If the Princess found this out, it was quite enough to put her into a passion of righteous wrath. Anyway, whatever the cause, for two or three years she had been forced to live on outwardly submissive and affectionate terms with people she distrusted and disliked. The consequence was that, continually on her guard and unable to give voice to the angry emotions that boiled within her, she had employed all her extraordinary power of will in teaching herself to be precociously self-controlled, precociously prudent and precociously secretive. Since she was incapable of saying what she did not think, she learned to say nothing at all and to bide her time. Altogether, nature and circumstances had combined to make the eighteen-year-old girl who ascended to the throne of England in July, 1837, an extraordinary and paradoxical mixture, blending a child's simplicity and a child's uninhibited violence of feeling with the self-command of a mature woman and the unhesitating authority of a born monarch.

This last quality showed itself at once, and alarmingly. "Since it has pleased providence to place me in this situation," runs the entry in her diary on the day of her accession, "I shall do my utmost to fulfil my duty toward my country; I am very young and perhaps in many, though not all things, inexperienced. But I am

sure that very few have more real good will and more real desire to do what is fit and right than I have." There was no doubt in her mind that one particular course of action was fit and right. It was all over for the Duchess of Kent and her schemes. Already, when William IV lay dying, the Princess had taken the opportunity to have a blazing row about Conroy with her mother, with the result that the Duchess for the last time asserted her parental rights and locked her daughter up in her room. It was foolish of her; she always was foolish. On her accession the Queen took action. Conroy was given a pension but banished from her presence, and the Duchess put firmly in her place. She asked, so the story runs, if there was anything she could do for her daughter. "I should like to be left alone," replied the Queen. Not only did she order that her bed should be removed out of the Duchess' room at once, but also she had dinner by herself. However, she did not attempt to rely completely on her own resources. Instinctively she looked about for someone to guide her steps through the unknown world in which she found herself. This came partly-from consciousness of her own inexperience, but still more from her extreme femininity, a femininity which made her, for all her strength of will, the reverse of independent-minded in coming to a judgment on general and impersonal matters. The fact that she was a woman also meant that she sought for her guide among the male sex. For the time being, indeed, sex in its extreme manifestations was latent in her. She was emotionally at the schoolgirl stage, looking less for a lover than for a hero, for some wise, benignant, fatherly figure on whom she could pour out all her youthful capacity for admiration. Other girls find such a man in some sympathetic schoolmaster or kindly clergyman; Queen Victoria found it in her Prime Minister.

Indeed, no one could have filled the role better. For in addition to being wise and benignant, he was also extremely handsome, an accomplished master in the art of pleasing women, and one of the most fascinating talkers in Europe. As a matter of fact, the Queen does not seem wholly to have realized how much of his attraction for her was due to these less serious qualities. In her diary she harps on his moral virtues: "A most truly honest, straightforward and noble minded man," she notes. "There are not many like him

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in this world of deceit." Above all, not Sir John Conroy, she implies! And certainly after Conroy it must have been pleasant to deal with someone who was a gentleman in the highest sense of that old-fashioned word. But all Melbourne's virtues could not have made the impression on her that they did had they not been enhanced by his dark, charming eyes, his virile elegance and his light, ironic sweetness. After all, it was soon to appear that she much preferred him to the praiseworthy Sir Robert Peel, as in later years she was to prefer Disraeli to Gladstone. These are not the sentiments of one who, whatever her avowed principles, does in fact set solemn, conscientious virtue above the charms and the graces. Perhaps, like many of the professionally respectable, Queen Victoria felt unexpectedly exhilarated by the company of those who looked on the moral law in a more light-hearted spirit than she was able to do herself. Whatever the reason, Melbourne did exactly satisfy the Queen's emotional needs at this phase in her development. He became the object of her schoolgirl hero worship; and this, like everything else about her, was more singlemindedly extreme than an ordinary schoolgirl could feel. He was equally drawn to her. At this time there was no woman in his life, and he could not do without one. No longer, however, did he wish to take on the role of lover, even in the most platonic sense of the word; he was too old. On the other hand, with age, his frustrated paternal instinct more and more felt the need of an outlet. He had reached the stage in life when a man of his type tends to turn to a daughter for emotional satisfaction, to someone to whom he can be a mentor-Melbourne had always liked being a mentor-and on whom he can lavish a tenderness that involves none of the ardors and tempests inseparable from most love affairs. The Queen supplied his requirements. Artless youth had always appealed to him, and in this instance its attraction was enhanced by worldly position. A young queen is in herself a romantic personage, especially to a man with Melbourne's imaginative sense of the poetry of history. Exquisitely he appreciated the incongruous contrast provided by the childish figure and the august, venerable role it was called upon to play. Moreover, apart from her age and her situation, the Oueen's character was one in itself to attract him. In most ways, no

## Per Legem Terrae

#### ERWIN N. GRISWOLD

We have been recently passing through what may be regarded as a period of anti-intellectualism in this country. In such times, it is fitting for scholars to consider their relation to the rest of the world. It is well for us now to remember that these periods of anti-intellectualism are recurrent in the history of our country and probably of the world. And it is well to remember, too, that they are not without a cause. Intellectualism is not the only useful or constructive factor in a society. Scholars are sometimes arrogant, and sometimes too withdrawn and aloof from the world to be useful, or at least to be understood. There are some lines from Mr. T. S. Eliot's latest play, *The Confidential Clerk*, which may be appropriate here:

What's surprising, well-bred people Are sometimes far from intellectual; And—what's less surprising—intellectual people Are often ill-bred.

Within wide limits, the capacity for scholarship may well be thought of as a public trust. Many scholars, in one way or another, devote their efforts to the common good and contribute to the progress of mankind. And the scholar, besides being a servant of his fellows, should be a humble man, for he is in a position to know how little he knows and how much more there is to be done just to hold our own, to say nothing of moving ahead.

Per legem terrae—"by the law of the land"—these words go back to Magna Carta, the Great Charter of 1215, wrested from King John by his barons, and the source of ideas far more potent than they could have realized. For the barons were interested in protecting themselves against an overbearing king, and had little inter-

© ERWIN N. GRISWOLD, Dean and Langdell Professor of Law at the Harvard Law School, first presented this article in a somewhat different form at Mount Holyoke College.

est in the basic rights of common men. In the thirty-ninth article of Magna Carta, apparently taken from an earlier Continental source, they included the provision that "no freeman shall be taken and imprisoned or disseised or exiled or in any way destroyed, nor will we go upon him nor send upon him, except by the lawful judgment of his peers and by the law of the land." This last phrase has had an almost unexampled persistence and power. Professor McIlwain has said, "Chapter thirty-nine was in 1215 the most important chapter in the charter, as it is today."

Thus there was planted in the stream of English law and English history—a stream of which we are now the largest branch—the seed of a great idea, an idea which has made an incalculable contribution to the development of our institutions. Just a few words, but they have time and again arisen at critical moments of our history and in one way or another have contributed to that long course of events through which we have sought to make ourselves civilized.

Do I not exaggerate? "By the law of the land"—can these words have such great significance? Are they not merely procedural at best? Historians have long debated the exact meaning of the various clauses in Magna Carta. One leading author has said that what the barons "wished to secure was justice and legality in all of the king's actions affecting private rights."

We have seen how and when the idea was planted. How did it grow? In the next century, legislation under Edward III made it clear that the protection of the article applied to every man without limitation—"of what estate or condition that he be." And it was this same statute of Edward III that for the first time used the phrase which has become commonplace in our own history, for it said that no man should be harmed in any way except "by due process of law."

Over the next three hundred years, many men, at many times, appealed to the Great Charter and the conceptions which it embodied. For our purposes, we may move on to Lord Coke, the great figure of the first part of the seventeenth century.

In an outstanding event of the history of our liberties, Coke advanced the law of the land against the king. This was in 1608,

#### PER LEGEM TERRAE

when James I asserted that he had power to take such cases as he might be pleased to determine and decide them as if he were himself a judge. Coke denied this, and the king was greatly offended, saying that this meant that he was "under the law, which was treason to affirm." To this, Coke replied, in words which he took from Bracton, that the king "ought not to be under men but under God and the law." This was a crucial application of the basic idea which we are considering.

In 1628, Coke wrote a "Commentary on Magna Carta," as a part of the work that is known as his *Institutes*. He showed the identity in meaning between the two phrases "the law of the land" and "due process of law," and that the purpose of these provisions was to protect the subject from oppressive uses of authority. In his words: "Every oppression against law, by colour of any usurped authority is a kinde of destruction, . . . : and it is the worst oppression that is done by the colour of justice." In this and other passages, Coke interpreted Magna Carta not so much in the light of its own historical setting as in the light and for the purposes of his own time.

Coke was a member of the committee that drew up the Petition of Right, in 1628, and was probably its principal author. In this, the House of Commons asserted itself against King Charles by condemning arbitrary taxation and imprisonment and the billeting of soldiers as being contrary to the law of the land.

Out of all these events there grew a great revival of the idea of protection of the citizen inherent in the phrases "law of the land" and "due process of law." This is perhaps most strikingly shown in the fact that the Act of Parliament which finally abolished the Star Chamber in 1640 recited that the actions of that body had not been in accordance with "due process of law," and were contrary to the "law of the land." Much of Locke's political writing was based on the ideas embodied in these two phrases. Both Coke and Locke had great influence on the development of the ideas of the colonists in this country a hundred years later.

These ideas came to America as a part of the heritage of our early English settlers, and we had here a soil on which they could flourish. When James Otis made his great argument in the "writs

of assistance" case in 1761, he included an argument based on Magna Carta, with specific reference to the "law of the land" provision. This argument had great influence on the colonial pamphleteers, who had so much to do with the mobilization of public opinion in the period. John Adams was one of those who took up this idea. The argument that "taxation without representation is tyranny" was simply an application of the basic idea of due process of law, thought by the colonists to be established by Magna Carta and thus to be their birthright.

When, after the Revolution, and the successful adoption of a federal Constitution, it was decided to add a bill of rights to that Constitution, it was natural that this traditional right should be included. The Fifth Amendment, largely drafted by James Madison, includes a provision that "No person shall . . . be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." Thus has the great provision of Magna Carta been carried forward to our own fundamental law. As Dr. Mott has said, "This portion of the Fifth Amendment may thus be regarded as containing phraseology of purest gold mined under the stress of heated constitutional crises, refined by the fire of violent revolutions, proved by the acid test of centuries of struggle, and molded by the hand of one of America's greatest constitutional draftsmen."

And thus we have this ancient doctrine included in our Constitution—now in both the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments. What the barons did in 1215, what Coke and his associates did in the seventeenth century, what the American patriots did in the eighteenth century—all of this, and much more, provides a clear continuity, linking our present institutions closely with all the struggles for liberty in the past three-quarters of a millennium.

But is not the due process clause technical lawyers' stuff? Was it not on the basis of this clause that the Supreme Court held that New York could not fix the length of hours that bakers might work, and that Congress could not fix a minimum wage for women in the District of Columbia? What do such decisions have to do with the struggle to obtain and to maintain liberty? The answer I would give is: Very little. They are only eddies in the stream which carries on the great idea. For the idea of due process, of the law of

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the land, is a great idea, and one of our greatest heritages from the past. It is something of the spirit, something that gives life to our political institutions. In very large part we take it for granted in our day-to-day relations with our fellow-men and with the several governments with which we deal. It is so deeply ingrained in us all that it is rarely violated; and many of the violations which do occur are naturally of the more or less technical sort with which courts deal.

In the long run, ideas are more powerful than more tangible weapons. And the idea of due process has been a very fruitful and pervading one in our history. What does it mean? Can it be defined? Many people feel the need for a rather precise sort of definition of concepts with which they deal—but this is not that sort of idea. This is an idea born out of the hearts of men. It has great capacity for development and growth, and yet a rather clear basic content. Perhaps it can be put by saying that it has some application wherever men feel a sense of injustice. Thus it becomes a chief source of support for individual liberties. What is liberty? Is it not freedom or protection of the individual against arbitrary or improper exercise of the organized power of the state? What is a tyrant? Is he not a man who exercises the collective power of the state in an arbitrary, capricious or purely selfish manner? Such words as arbitrary and capricious are difficult words. They may not in fact mean much more than "unreasonable," and that in turn may mean in substance "not customary" or not what we are accustomed to. Perhaps it may be said that we are accustomed to decent treatment from our public officers, and that our hearts and minds recoil when that custom is broken. It is with this sort of thing that the idea of due process, of the law of the land, is concerned.

Violations of cherished ideals and aspirations have often been overcome in our history by arguments based on the general idea of due process, of the law of the land. In recent times, the due process clause has been the basis of decisions such as these: (1) a judge cannot properly try a case if he is directly interested in the outcome; and (2) a person cannot be subjected to a secret trial with no chance to defend himself.

Now let us turn to the question which has been constantly

recurring in recent days. Does this basic idea have any application to legislative investigations? Do these investigations always measure up to our ideal of due process of law? I think it fair to say that a large section of the public has from time to time felt "a sense of injustice" with respect to some of these hearings; and if they have, then there is a situation where the ancient ideal of due process is involved. A failure to appreciate the intimate relation between sound procedure and the preservation of liberty is implicit in that saddest and most short-sighted remark of our times: "I don't like the methods, but. . . . " Methods and procedures are of the essence of due process and are of vital importance to liberty. As Mr. Justice Brandeis wrote some thirty years ago, "... in the development of our liberty insistence on procedural regularity has been a large factor." More recently, Mr. Justice Frankfurter has put the same truth in these words: "The history of liberty has largely been the history of observance of procedural safeguards."

The complaint against the Star Chamber was chiefly one of bad procedures. Torture is a procedure. Inquisition without charge, forcing a witness to testify against himself, and the other things which were standard practice in the infamous Star Chamber would all fall into the category of procedure. Liberty is established and preserved by the development and maintenance of proper procedures. It is, in the last analysis, only through procedural rules that the individual is protected against arbitrary governmental action. And, as we have seen, the very essence of liberty is the protection of the individual against arbitrary application of the collective power of the state.

I am not opposed to legislative investigations. They clearly have a proper place in our governmental structure. The fact, though, that they can be useful and necessary does not mean that they should not be properly conducted, and under proper safeguards and procedures. Nor does it mean that when not properly conducted they may not violate our basic and fundamental conceptions of due process which are rooted so firmly in Magna Carta. In my opinion, some recent legislative investigations have been clear violations of due process. If so, why have the courts not so held? The answer is easy. The courts do not have the sole responsibility for the

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proper conduct of our government. As Mr. Justice Stone once said: "Courts are not the only agency of government that must be assumed to have capacity to govern." At this point another important governmental doctrine comes into play—the separation of powers. The courts have their responsibilities, but so do the executive and the legislative branches of the government. All are sworn to uphold the Constitution, including the due process clause of so ancient and vital an origin.

The responsibility for the proper conduct of legislative investigations is clearly in the legislature. In the case of investigations by the federal legislature, the responsibility is clearly in Congress and its two houses. Has this responsibility been fully met? It seems to me quite clear that the answer to that question is "No." Why has it not been met? What can be done about it?

Before turning to an answer to these questions, I would like to pause to make one important observation. It is wholly clear, I believe, that no senator or representative has any power whatever to make an investigation or to require the presence of witnesses and their answers to questions merely because he is a congressman or senator. An election to the House of Representatives or to the Senate does not make a man any sort of a magistrate, nor does it vest him with any power at all over his fellow-citizens except to cast his vote in the body to which he has been elected. The power of investigation is a power which is solely attributable to the collective body, the House of Representatives or the Senate.

When an investigation is being conducted, the power that is being exercised is that of the House or the Senate. No committee of either body has any power to conduct any investigation except as a result of a delegation from that body. No subcommittee of a committee has any power to investigate except on a delegation of the power delegated by the House or Senate to the committee. If there is a subcommittee of one, the power exercised by that one is not any power that is his by virtue merely of his being a member of the legislative body. If he has any power, it is only because there has been a proper delegation or sub-delegation to him of the basic power of the House or Senate.

I mention this because it is important in the consideration of the

questions which I have posed and to which I want to suggest some answers. Since the power exercised by a committee or a subcommittee is the power of the House or Senate itself, responsibility for that power and its exercise rests not on the committee or the subcommittee of one or more, but upon the House or Senate itself, acting, of course, by a majority vote of its members. One of the important steps which must be taken if we are to find a solution for problems in this area is, I believe, to focus attention on the fact that these hearings which are the occasion of concern are not merely private frolics of an individual member, but are an exercise of the power of a house of Congress for which every member of that house has a full and equal responsibility.

Clearly there is a problem here. Why has it not been dealt with long before this time? It is a difficult problem, and it would be too much to expect it to be completely solved in a short time. But the fact is that virtually nothing at all has been done about it. There has been some talk, and some indication that something might be done. But the actual results so far are not impressive. Why is that? One reason, I think, is that only recently has it become a serious problem. It is clear that our legislative bodies include a very large number of able, high-minded men, who are quite interested in the ideal of due process. Why have they not taken action to establish proper procedures in legislative investigations?

The answer is not simple, but there is one aspect of it which is, I think, perhaps insufficiently understood by the average citizen. The fact is that, for practical purposes, the House of Representatives and the Senate are regarded by their members as clubs—the Senate, of course, being the more exclusive. Each member of the House or Senate has his own standards. And in a great many cases these standards are very high. But with almost no exception, no member seeks to impose his standards on any other member. Once you are in the club, how you act is up to you, and no member wants to undertake to interfere in the conduct of any other member—partly, I suppose, because he does not want anyone else to interfere with him. This is unfortunate, I think, though perhaps natural and understandable.

There is an important distinction here, which has, I fear, been

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overlooked in the consideration of this matter of legislative investigations. A senator or congressman who is conducting an investigation, either as a subcommittee of one or in association with other members, is not acting as an individual. Everything he does directly involves the other members of the body, and they should share responsibility for the exercise of the power they have delegated, power which inheres only in the body as a whole. The problem can be solved by establishing by law, or by rule of each house, a proper standard of procedure for the conduct of legislative investigations, which will keep them wholly consistent with our basic and deeply felt notions of due process of law.

In conclusion I would like to outline some provisions which, it seems to me, should be included in an established regulation of procedure for legislative investigations. I have in mind primarily the federal scene. Before turning to that, though, I would like to point out that we are not wholly without precedents. This is, interestingly enough, an area in which the states have, on the whole, done a much better job than has the federal legislature. In New York a commission has recently made a promising report on this whole matter. In Massachusetts the legislature, in establishing two recent recess commissions, one to investigate crime and the other to investigate communism, has included substantial provisions designed to protect the rights of witnesses and to insure the proper conduct of these investigations. As a result, there have been no complaints about the activities of these commissions, and we have not been subjected to the spectacles which have so frequently been produced on the federal stage. For these wise provisions we should give respect and thanks to the Massachusetts legislature and to its Committee on the Judiciary, which was undoubtedly responsible for their first formulation. But why cannot the Congress do as well?

Much work has been done over the past several years toward formulating a suitable and proper code of conduct for federal legislative investigations. A number of members of Congress have devoted much thought and effort to this task, and a number of bills have been introduced. President Eisenhower has announced that he understands that Congress is going to establish such standards—and it is clearly the responsibility of Congress. Legislative leader-

ship on this question is still not impressive, but it should come. Probably it would be more accurate to say that there has been leadership, and good leadership, but it has been hard so far for the leaders to get an effective following. The matter is too important, too closely connected with our basic liberties to be longer neglected.

These are some of the things, as I see it, which should be included in a proper code of practice for legislative investigations. Of first importance is the elimination of the one-man subcommittee in any proceeding involving a witness who appears involuntarily. In our concern over recent events, we should not forget that there is much of the business of Congress which is not controversial, and there are many situations in which a witness wants to appear. As long as he appears voluntarily, there may be little objection, as far as the witness is concerned, to his appearing before any sort of body, including a subcommittee of one. Even then there may be a public interest in having a member of the other party present so that more than one point of view may be represented. When a witness appears under subpoena, when he is compelled to testify against his will, the situation is wholly different. Then I say that the power of Congress against him should not be asserted by a subcommittee of a single member.

Closely related to this is the matter of the issuance of subpoenas. The practice with respect to subpoenas has come to be very loose; indeed it might be called lax. It is the standard practice, I believe, in many committees, for the chairman of the committee to sign up a batch of subpoenas in blank and hand them to the staff of the committee. Then the staff fills in the name of a witness whose testimony is wanted, and the subpoena is served upon him. Such a practice is highly improper. There is here a close analogy with a search warrant which can only be issued by a judge. With respect to such warrants, Mr. Justice Douglas has said that the requirement of a search warrant is made "so that an objective mind might weigh the need. . . . The right of privacy was deemed too precious to entrust to the discretion of those whose job is the detection of crime and the arrest of criminals. Power is a heady thing; . . ." No subpoena should be issued to compel testimony except as a result of

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the action of the committee itself, not the chairman alone or its staff. There are few ways in which the organized power of the state is brought to bear on a citizen more sharply than through a subpoena to compel testimony. Such a power should not be exercised on the judgment or discretion or whim of a single man.

When a witness is summoned, he should be given several protections which have not heretofore been made available. He should be told in advance the subject and the scope of the inquiry. He should have the right to counsel, and counsel should be entitled to speak on his behalf as well as to advise him as to his rights. In many committees now, the right to counsel is formally recognized. But counsel, though present, is restricted to giving advice when called upon. He cannot address the committee; and counsel who have sought to do so have been ejected from hearing rooms. The right should be a right to effective counsel, and not the mere shadow of that right that has been recently allowed.

If testimony is taken in executive session (which should never be done unless the witness is willing), no member of the committee or of its staff should make available selected portions of the testimony, or summaries or incomplete versions of it. The committee should not be allowed to say, through its chairman or otherwise, "We have evidence of" so-and-so, unless that evidence is produced in an open hearing.

Of very great importance, I believe, is a rule protecting the witness from having to submit to broadcasting, television, newsreel cameras or any other form of recording or reproduction, except the ordinary stenographic transcript. Even popping flash bulbs can be an indignity and a source of strain to a witness. It is high time that we recognized and accepted the fact that legislative investigations are not a part of show business. Witnesses should not be required to testify in order to provide a spectacle for the public. Requiring testimony under such conditions is not compatible with any sound notion of due process of law, and I would expect our courts, as some have already done, to uphold a witness who refuses to testify for broadcast of any sort. We have even had Congressional investigations put on with sponsors, with advertising during the intervals. Can anyone possibly defend such a practice?

In this connection I would like to state my own view that a legislative investigation is improper when its sole or basic purpose is to "expose" people or to develop evidence for use in criminal prosecutions. We have had chairmen of legislative committees who have announced that that was the purpose of the hearings they were conducting. In my opinion, they have thus demonstrated the impropriety of the exercise of power which they are seeking to carry out, and I would hope that the courts, when properly invoked, would decide that there was no legislative power for such a purpose.

There are many other rights and refinements which should be established and recognized in connection with legislative investigations. For example, a person summoned should have due notice of the nature of the evidence that is wanted from him. A witness should surely be entitled to explain his answers, and he should have an opportunity to answer any charges made against him or any evidence against him produced by other witnesses.

Many congressmen and senators are aware of these problems and are trying to get them worked out. Reference may be made in particular to the work of Congressman Keating, the chairman of a subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee, and to Congressman Scott, who has recently introduced House Resolution 447, which, if adopted, would go far toward resolving the problems as far as the House is concerned. The Senate should also go ahead with similar action.

Before leaving this matter, it should be observed that it is of first importance not only that proper procedures be established, but also that there be appropriate sanctions to make these procedures effective. This is not easy. Probably the most effective sanction in the long run would be a provision which would relieve a witness from any obligation to testify, and thus from any punishment for refusal to testify, when the procedures are not followed. A sanction against the committee or its members is doubtless unrealistic. But the committee should lose its compulsory powers when it does not conduct itself properly.

Finally, it should be emphasized again that responsibility for working out proper procedures for legislative investigations rests upon Congress and its two houses. Complaints against the Presi-

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dent or others outside of Congress are misdirected. Congress has the power to provide proper procedures for legislative investigations, and it should meet its clear responsibility.

The spirit of due process of law, the law of the land, our ancient heritage of liberty, requires that we bring order and fairness into this field which has recently become so chaotic. We have been through struggles of this sort in the past, and justice and liberty have always eventually won out. Indeed we have been strengthened in our liberties by each such struggle. In this connection, I think of a phrase which was used by our late Chief Justice Harlan F. Stone. He referred to "the sober second thought of the community, which is the firm base on which all law must ultimately rest." For myself, I have great faith in the sober second judgment of the people. The immediate reaction of the people, like that of any individual, may be hasty, emotional, irrational or unsound. But when that phase is past, when they have had a real chance to think through their problems, I have confidence that the people will demand a better standard of conduct in legislative investigations than has been evidenced in the recent past. In making this statement, I want to pay due and deserved respect to the many members of both houses who have not abused their powers and have been scrupulous in the exercise of their authority.

Though we live in stirring times, we should not forget that many generations of our ancestors have lived through times which were for them more trying than ours. It was Aeneas who heartened his men by saying to them, *O passi graviora*, "Oh you who have lived through worse days." It is not surprising that now, as in earlier times, there have been those who seek to exploit our fears. Nor should it be surprising that many people, at least at first, respond to such exploitation. But it is the way of life to have to meet new problems; and, while doing so, we should not give up old values.

In protecting ourselves from the threat of communism, we should not adopt methods of oppression here which the Communists themselves would use. After all, the essence of communism is the subordination of the individual to the state. And the essence of liberty, for which our ancestors fought, on both sides of the Atlantic, is the freedom of the individual from the arbitrary power of govern-

mental authorities. When we see more clearly that our present problem is simply one of due process of law in its pervasive sense, so fundamental throughout more than seven centuries of history, we will have no difficulty in finding a satisfactory solution which will recognize and preserve the basic rights of individuals while providing ample protection for the state.

The problems of our day may be useful problems. It is good, I think, that we should have to bestir ourselves from time to time to protect our liberties, as our ancestors did on many occasions in the past. If we take these rights for granted, if we accept them as a matter of course, we may simply fritter them away and end by losing them, and possibly deserve to lose them. And so I would suggest that we not be discouraged nor even be unduly concerned if basic human rights are under attack. These are rights which thrive in vindication, and each generation better understands them and their significance if it has to think them through for itself. We are given a great opportunity today, to which I think we will measure up, if the past is any guide. Like the barons at Runnymede, like Coke and Locke and Otis and Adams and Madison, and many others whose names are lost to fame, we may be able to make our own contribution to that ancient concept which has rallied the spirits of free Englishmen and Americans for many centuriesthe law of the land.

# Just a Few Bricks in the English Glasshouse

#### REGINALD REYNOLDS

What with billy graham having been right here in England and the H-bomb just around the corner, there's not a Henry Dubb in this country who can forget America for long. Even the New Yorker is now assumed to be sufficiently familiar to the vicar's wife (not to mention the dental deficients in the waiting rooms of the welfare state) for Punch to have risked a heavy satire on its American contemporary. Add to this, McCarthy as a front page sensation and the unfailing celluloid of Hollywood—and you have the whole garble in one acid drop.

If you are looking for tones and inflections, of course, there are enough to confuse the most avid intellectual. Somewhere in the thirties, Beaverbrook's Evening Standard discovered Damon Runyon, who is still widely read. Saroyan came to town about the same time. Thurber has had an increasing vogue, and E. B. White, a late starter, may yet catch up with him. Since the days when we read Upton Sinclair and Sinclair Lewis, the switch (in spite of Hemingway) has been toward American humor—which may be proof of our discernment. Not only have some American humorists, since the time of Mark Twain, been the best social critics in America, but they have been the best humorists in the English language. The two facts are connected, and the reading public here may dimly realize it, even if the English humorists can't see why. We have produced snobbish humor, decadent humor, facetious humor, gross humor and—at our best—pure nonsense. We have to look across the Atlantic for humor as the protest of

<sup>•</sup> When asked for a brief biographical sketch, author REGINALD REYNOLDS had this to say about himself: "My interests vary from John Woolman and Gandhi to the history of beards, beds and lavatories, on all of which subjects I have written books."

sanity and humanity against their opposites. A cynic might say that a diseased society develops its own antidotes—I'm not risking it.

Over here we don't develop anything much, except paralysis. To the traditional pursuits of watching cricket matches and adoring the royal family, the Englishman has added the even more sedentary thrill of the football pools. I can safely say that since my first memories of politics, public interest has dwindled steadily—in inverse ratio to the increasing gravity of the issues. When my father, in about 1910, stood on a cart in the main street of our town to explain the virtues of free trade, he could collect a big crowd, even if some of the burghers were for putting him in a horse trough which at least showed they were not apathetic. Free trade versus protective tariffs today seems an odd controversy to raise any heat. But my father would throw black bread to the crowd (he had brought it back from Germany) just to show what our own bread would be like if the Tories got back into power. A handout of radioactive fish from the Pacific today would never make such a stir as my father kicked up on the price and quality of the English loaf.

Some people say that it's all because people sit at home now and take their news and views from radio and television. If that's true, we are damned indeed, for the B.B.C. sees to it that nobody ever intentionally says anything important. B.B.C. voices alone would have been enough to kill the news value of the Great Flood or anything that ever happened; but that's another subject.

In trying to show how we look at America, the first thing to explain is that we see everything rather dimly, like a man dreaming about a foggy night. Of course, it isn't true that we always sit quietly in front of our radio sets, if that is supposed to be the reason for—say—the Albert Hall being two-thirds empty when some leading pacifists and others tried to interest London in the H-bomb. All the people who weren't there were blocking Piccadilly and the whole West End, not long after, at the time of the Cup Final. My own guess is that the worse things become, the less people here want to think about them.

Naturally the thinking American will want to know what his opposite number over here is doing about things in general, and

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that leads directly on to what the British intelligentsia thinks about America. I want to say right away, with a violence which only the spoken word can adequately convey, that I dislike the very word intelligentsia. My Concise Oxford Dictionary says: "The part of a nation (esp. the Russian) that aspires to independent thinking." The word itself is revealed by the parenthesis as a dismal hangover from the thirties, when owl-faced young men from the universities lisped Marxist clichés in Hampstead and Bloomsbury. That was the Augustan Age of the parlor Bolshevik and the fellow-traveler. I resist with difficulty the temptation to reminisce; but if I refrain, it is not to spare lashing a dead donkey. The beast still lives, though it has changed its colors: the pity is that nothing can change its nature.

And here we meet the disturbing fact that the ruling literary cliques are still the same as those which "gave their little Senate laws" twenty years ago. McCarthy would enjoy himself if he could muckrake in our barnyard, but Kinsey's revelations might be even more startling. An American friend of mine who was in London during the war investigated the literary cliques and summed them up in one phrase which I should not be allowed to use here. But it was true. I happen to be one of those simpletons who dislike persecuting people because they are or have been Communists. I also dislike the persecution of homosexuals. But weak-headed young men who become Communists merely because it is the intellectual vogue and drop the cult later for an equally frivolous reason are likely to remain ditherers. Add a streak of pederasty, with the cliquism into which its victims fall or are pushed, and you have all the ingredients of ineffectiveness—instability of purpose and cultural isolation.

Perhaps in no country have the "intellectuals" less influence, and—one may add—in no country are the "intellectuals" more self-conscious regarding their soi-disant intellectuality. Like the word intelligentsia, the word intellectual has acquired an unpleasant smell. This reaction must not be misinterpreted as a revolt against reason, though the defenders of the title have inherited from the thirties a gramophone record about fascism and reaction for use whenever their pretensions are challenged. It is the validity of their

claim, not of the thing claimed, which is under dispute. The plight of the high-brow cliques is the nemesis of a misspent youth, as Herbert Spencer remarked of a proficiency at billiards. They share very little scholarship, even less ordinary intelligence and an almost total absence of courage and integrity. Outside the theater, real creative writing is becoming rare. Those who strained after originality in the thirties have succumbed to literary hernia and now earn a base living as critics. Even reviewing can be lively—a fact of which I am reminded whenever an American literary journal comes into my hands—but the book reviews here give a strong impression of being divided into two main groups: (1) extravagant praise for any writer with whom the critic is allied—for example, though not exclusively, in the "trade union" of inverts; (2) peevish pettiness with regard to all others.

There are excellent and obvious reasons for not pursuing this theme in further detail. For present purposes it is only an attempt to explain certain reactions to America by means of a rough generalization about a section of our own population. The characteristic peevishness of our literary criticism is naturally to be found in most reviews of American books, though it is complicated by a mixture of fear, jealousy and complete lack of understanding. The solution is frequently sought in a pedagogic form of amiable patronage, which reminds one of those back-handed compliments to other women which are attributed to Tallulah Bankhead.

In search of an illustration I had merely to pick up the May, 1954, number of the London Magazine, edited by John Lehmann. Three American novels are reviewed in one article by Francis Wyndham. Most of the article reads like an end-of-term school report by a pedantic and disillusioned old schoolmarm on the work of children in their early teens. Even Alfred Hayes, who was patted quite heavily on the back, had to be reminded that two earlier novels of his had "shown promise." (It may be an idiosyncrasy of my own, but I particularly dislike that cliché, smacking so smugly of the schoolroom.) Charles Wertenbaker's book, The Death of Kings, is even more heavily patronized and eventually damned with something worse than faint praise as "an excellent example of

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intellectual journalism." As the old dog said, the worst of some bitches is that they're such women.

However, it's Saroyan who receives the full blast of the old lady's malice. Just listen to this from the school report. William, it seems, has perpetrated his "latest perversion of a technique he himself helped to originate, where a series of short sentences, portentously casual, pretends to disguise a sentimentality at the same time arch, arty, and almost infantile." Considering that Saroyan's work will be remembered and read when nobody will know or care who Francis Wyndham was (if, indeed, many either know or care today), this pompous verdict almost redeems itself by its unconscious humor. But it is not so funny for those of us in Britain who are concerned with the creation of an objective appreciation of literature—American or otherwise. To use some of Mr. Wyndham's own words, I find in them "the latest perversion of a technique which he had not even the merit of originating, where long and meaningless sentences, pontifically pretentious, attempt to disguise an animosity at the same time ignorant, offensive and completely ridiculous."

Let me hang on to Mr. Wyndham for a moment, while we have him under the microscope. He is a fair sample, a recent one and chosen at random from the first high-brow journal I happened to pick up. Try these two, if your blood pressure will stand it:

The number of good love stories that have ever been written anywhere is not a large one. This is particularly true of American writing, where a wide choice of techniques, all second-hand and rigidly controlled, is now available.

The American novel has reached a stage of sophistication where the faux naïf, either in style or content, is the note above all others it can no longer afford to strike.

My first extract begins with a statement at once sweeping and vague. What is a "good" love story and what is a "large" number? How wide, one reflects, must be the reading of this reviewer who can judge of all the love stories "that have ever been written anywhere." It is from such an Olympian view of the historical and geographical panorama that the omniscient polyglot swoops upon

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America to discover, what he could have learned from Ecclesiastes, that there is no new thing under the sun. There is an essential and eternal plagiarism about sex, and anybody can make a case that any love story is secondhand—the permutations must long since have been worked out. The thing itself is as hackneyed as spring or sunrise. But why limit the criticism to the American field? Would the same writer, for example, imply that the secondhand business of death or parturition was peculiar to America?

If the first quotation, when defecated, leaves a residue of poppycock, the second is plain insolence. The reference to the faux naïf was intended as a rap for Saroyan, who can take it without looking round to see what hit him. But the sentence as a whole does much to explain why the people of this island succeed in exasperating everybody else in turn. "There is one thing," an Indian once said to a friend of mine, in the days of British rule, "which we find it very hard to forgive you. It is your damned moral superiority!" The tone of Mr. Wyndham's generalization on the American novel is that of a colonial administrator telling a subject race that it is coming on nicely. Not only are we the witnesses, the judge and the jury in this assessment of progress, but we are also the standard measure: "In time you will grow up, you will mature—you may even hope eventually to become something like me, if you do as I tell you." So the American novel, like the African of the Gold Coast, is commended on having "reached a stage of sophistication." I don't know how old Mr. Wyndham is, but I strongly suspect that Henry James was dead before Wyndham was born. And maybe he never heard of Dreiser.

My brief is not to defend Americans from such critics—that would be as pretentious as the patronage or defamation banged out by our high-brow hacks. Criticism—as my own article doubtless illustrates—always tells the reader at least as much about the critic as it tells him about the object of analysis. Get his measure and you can even use the worst critic—in reverse gear. (I know a man who always buys any book which receives a specially vicious review in one literary weekly here. He says it is an infallible guide and takes the journal only for that purpose.) American writers can look after themselves; but that doesn't absolve an English writer

from feeling some responsibility about our own corrupt standards. It's not that I object to seeing our people hit out at the Americans and hit hard, but that is what they hardly ever do, even though Achilles is a monster with many heels and all of them vulnerable. Few of those journals which are believed in America to be "anti-American" and even sometimes described as "Communist" (a grim joke to those of us who know the timid old women who run them and write for them) will carry an outspoken attack on anything American. I may misjudge the whole situation and give too much credit to America; but I have a feeling that our intelligentsia would earn and deserve more respect across the Atlantic if it did hit hard instead of handing out either obsequious bouquets or querulous patronage.

For example, there was in the Twentieth Century (May, 1954) an admirable article by Geoffrey Wagner entitled "Rough Stuff." It was an attack, completely justified in my view, on the export of Hollywood films presenting to the world a picture of America as a criminal lunatic asylum. Instead of the turgid slabs of obscure, ambiguous or meaningless prose to which readers of our literary journals become accustomed, Wagner's article was at once vivid and precise, indignant and yet faultless in its logic. As I read it I realized four things: first, that his attack on the "almost insane particularity of sadistic delineation" in many American movies was fully justified; second, that the job could not have been done more forcibly; third, that he was not anti-American, but a man talking in plain language about the harm done, primarily to America and American interests abroad, by the steady increase of thuggery and brutality in these Hollywood portraits of American life; and last, I realized that the most significant thing about this essay in semantics was the fact that the writer, although English, lived in America. The habit of outspoken frankness had, surely, something to do with the fact that he had rescued himself from suffocation in our literary hothouse.

I know at least that if I were an American I would prefer it that way, with no groveling and no simpering malice. When a man writes like Wagner, you can enjoy reading him, even if you disagree with every word he says. But here that kind of robust criti-

cism is almost dead. All the hoarded resources of our older universities—those "seminaries of the ignorance of the inland peasant," as Lord Brougham or somebody once called them—have supplied us with a race of critics "whose sharpest weapon is a crooked sneer."

Since the war, our intellectuals can no longer pretend that American literature doesn't exist. Not only did some of our more fervent stand-up-to-Hitler fellows spend a comfortable time in America during the blitz, but the end of the war found the rest of them straining their eyes for dollar markets. That was reasonable enough, though many of us here were bitterly ashamed and disgusted when *Horizon* launched its "Begging Bowl" appeals in America to feed the authors of Britain. (I don't know which was the more revolting—the lie that we hadn't enough to eat, when many found it possible to send regular parcels of food to the Continent, or the assumption that authors were in greater need of extra nourishment than other people.) Whatever American readers of *Horizon* thought about it, the cringing sponsors of this unprecedented mendicancy could hardly continue to ignore the American literary world from which they so shamelessly cadged.

In the new situation it is characteristic that American humor has been, on the whole, overlooked by the cliques here. The humor of the invert, such as it is, is generally hard and brittle. Perhaps the last "leftist" writer here, of any distinction, who used wit and humor as effective tools was George Orwell. A few social satirists of the "right" remain, such as Monsignor Ronald Knox and D. B. Wyndham Lewis, but these are out of the main current and well beyond the prevailing cliques. Having little or no capacity to appreciate what may be the most characteristic American contribution to our common literature, the dreary critics of our literary journals are more at home with The Naked and the Dead or From Here to Eternity than they will ever be with Dorothy Parker or with the exquisitely subtle short-story writers of the New Yorker.

Characteristically the *New Yorker* is described by William J. Newman in the April *Twentieth Century* as "middlebrow." It takes one back to the days of the left-bank coteries in prewar Paris, when any author who could sell more than an edition of a few hundred copies was contemptuously dismissed as a "best-seller." Our intel-

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lectuals are still so self-consciously living up to the name that they blush at the thought of the sales which they covet. It is not long since a good honest woman whose nearest acquaintance with literature is the scrubbing of a library floor saw The Confidential Clerk by some comedy of errors. She told my wife afterward that she thought it "smashing." But such praise from such a source might smash Eliot's reputation here, if it could be known in the best Hampstead circles. This desperate cult of the new, the unknown and the recherché, this obsession with brow levels and fear (witness Francis Wyndham, as quoted above) of the "second-hand," even in the most elemental and recurrent experiences, has led many of our critics to look with favor on the very tendencies which Geoffrey Wagner denounced in American films. Those who once tried to ignore American literature are in many cases prepared today to praise its most decadent products.

There is no honest cod in this pander-puff. It is a pose, and a damnable, poxy, dangerous pose from our own standpoint, though America can (and probably does, very rightly) ignore English critics. The vitality of American literature today is such that it can't help sporting some freaks, and little harm is done. On one small front, though, I wish for the sake of all concerned that America were better represented. I refer to the American Information Library in Grosvenor Square, where some of the most intelligent American journals are unobtainable, or practically so. (There was a solitary copy, two years old, of The American Scholar, when I called there recently.) The assumption that intelligent reading must be un-American is a slander on the United States which deprives readers at Grosvenor Square of good material and gives an unfair impression of American output.

J. B. Priestley, who stands well outside the cliques (and is commonly referred to as "middle-brow" by the snobbish young men who envy him), is among the few here who have written with knowledge and discrimination about contemporary American literature. I suppose one should also welcome a recent cheap anthology (Penguin) of American verse; but the blight on all anthologies is that each one is a personal selection of which nobody else fully approves. I've been in that position myself, but still don't

feel as generous as I ought to be over another editor's difficulties. However, it does mean an increasing consciousness here of an America that is not all Hollywood and hydrogen bombs or witch hunts and Midwest revivalism—and that's all to the good.

The fact still remains that the great mass of people here know little of America. I wish my own knowledge were comparable to my curiosity. One woman, otherwise well read, admitted to me recently that she had read hardly any American literature and did not want to do so. "They've taken our place in the world without being fit for it," she said bitterly, "and they're decadent without ever having been great." (Later she admitted that this was not quite fair, in view of her acknowledged ignorance.) I doubt if the new patronage of some American writers by our intelligentsia will greatly help. As the same woman rightly said, our intellectuals have the welldeserved contempt of the British public. Their struthious politics have damned them no less effectively than their literary preciosity. Ever since the thirties, when brave young men raised hue and cry after the fictitious figure of "Colonel Blimp" (symbol of a longdeceased Victorian type) and shut their eyes to real and insidious dangers—including the Muscovite dope they themselves peddled —the intellectuals have lived in spiritual exile from the "masses" of whom they once loved to talk ad nauseam.

I don't mean that the Common Man is, by contrast, enlightened. He's bewildered and bedeviled in a world where London is manifestly no longer the hub. The Ptolemaic Anglocentric earth of our imagination has vanished without any effort on our part to achieve the necessary adjustment. We dimly realize that our fate is being decided in Washington and the Kremlin; and we resent it, without making any effort to play a hand of our own. People want American bases here, but complaints are frequent about being an "occupied country." There is fear of Russia, often coupled with a hatred of Americans, because we hate being dependent on them.

The late H. J. Massingham, who was a Tory but a man of shrewd judgment in many things, said of the modern mind that it had "become as slow to peace as Providence is to anger. It goes on fortifying itself against the irresistible, whether by the moral surrenders of a false appearament or the physical armament of a false se-

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curity." That seems to sum up this country today even better than it did when it was written some years ago. All this is parenthetic to the question of our attitude to America, but may help to explain it. Also it reminds me that perhaps the one place where our intellectuals make any contact with ordinary people is in the Labour party, where there has been a growing tendency to choose young theorists from the universities as Parliamentary candidates—a small contribution to the general confusion. Superficially, the Labour party intelligentsia is anti-American, which does a great deal of harm. But in fact it is afraid of America and will rarely hit out on just the issues which call for hard-hitting—where it could count on a great deal of support in the United States. The result is that many false impressions are created reciprocally, while the real issues are rarely discussed with any frankness. If, for example, most people in Britain think that every institution in the United States is corrupt, it is because American films have repeated this so often, in italics. But I have yet to see Hollywood trounced here on that count as Geoffrey Wagner lammed it for sadism and brutality. And so one could go on indefinitely.

For the rest, the ordinary, uninformed people here—from the solid citizens to the adolescent "Teddy-boys" and their female counterparts in long, tight pants—all know that America is New York, Chicago and Hollywood. They know that all Americans are rich and generous (or "chuck their money about," if you happen to be jealous, as many are where American troops are found). They know that American police are brutal or sentimental or both, and that the same applies to the ubiquitous American gangsters. They know that America is a fairyland where Cinderella marries a millionaire and the hard-working boy gets her when the millionaire conveniently dies. I half believe it myself. One day, perhaps, I shall find out the truth.

# POEMS

by gene baro

## The Victims

Is it so hard to give he must remember a thousand faces and the spread land and city from the vantage of the hill? Hung the pure instant between earth and heaven, his had the character only of another individual death, or so it seemed. Such was the public moment and the blue afternoon, but these have passed away with the tongues to tell it, with the palaces fallen to ruins, indistinguishable, the shops gone to dust, the land breathless. Even the many minds after have passed through the dust of their commentaries, as many as the times would allow, and there are testaments too many for the singular facts of dying. The wounds cannot be believed, when each perception is a wound: each garden may overbrim its agony. It is not that we have forgotten him, but that the thieves are forgotten, and we have remembered ourselves, but not in the mercy of his means, being ourselves fearful and many. Who could not guess his persuasion that godhead gave, the miracle of self? This was the warning that there must not be death, but the act of living, in which death is implicit, like faith. So were the vows of the many the trial of a single man, yielding ghost, god, and grace, but also the plain human meaning, smaller than the dazzling sky or the multitude: a man may not be less

than his singularity, and this is the death of the many who crowd the public steps, seeking the holiday, anonymous in denial and self-denial, where laughter echoes and coins jingle, absolved, except in the surfeit of that memory, the cry behind the common music for whose shadow hangs against the roaring sun.

## by joanne de longchamps

## Tango

Our longest love will not outlive us but go down crying in the cold of those sealed countries walled within.

Heat dictates the tango years and we outlive our gliding loves, outstay our spring and summer selves repenting of the coldest change when forward looking turned its face to looking back.

See

all our moons ascend and snap like children's lost balloons of light.

Over meadows moulting down, hot landscapes alter to a thin God-fearing city spiked with spires, robbed of roses and of swans.

Rivers carried prints of leaves, sucked sweetness in a riot of sun

where ice has settled down to stay—trees are gallows waving ghosts.

There is nothing to be done but this: Take grief to bed, last chilly lover who will be faithful kissing in the cold.

## The Pier

All things these waters touch are close to grief, even this summer instance drugged with light has surface shimmer only. Yellow and brief the season of sun is simple varnishing for the cold kept under, the colors kept in shifting layers angled from our sight. We look and say, the sea is green today.

We look and walk in love along the pier, warm with each other, my hand inside your hand, and move into the sideshow atmosphere of booths with shoddy flags, the diving bell. Our joy flings out to race the whirligigs but carnivals are spinning in your hand where private music turns a carousel.

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Subtract from days and sullen nights to live this time together. Shadows on a scene of staying sea we play the fugitive and move to shoals of loss. The cutting reef of forced goodbyes warns shipwreck, will destroy this more-than-pleasure craft, love's brittle boat.

All things that lovers touch are close to grief.

## To You and You

On guard!
Forever be on guard!
Though you be blameless
In deed, in word,
Beware!
For now the times are ill,
The air foul.

Though you be chaste as ice And pure as snow, Virtue, alone, can not suffice To shield and spare your innocence; Virtue is no defense.

Slander's an assassin
That strikes to kill,
Sinuous innuendo,
A snake that coils within the shrubbery,
Poised for the precise, poisonous instant!

The poetry, fiction and criticism of GENE BARO have appeared in a wide variety of publications. Another of his poems was presented in the Summer, 1951, issue of The American Scholar.

<sup>©</sup> The poems of JOANNE DE LONGCHAMPS have appeared in the University of Kansas City Review, Prairie Schooner, Experiment, Golden Goose and Inferno.

<sup>☼</sup> MELVILLE CANE, lawyer and poet, has contributed articles, fiction and verse to leading magazines. His latest book is Making a Poem.

## Uncle Sam and the Farmer

## HENRY C. TAYLOR

The New administration in Washington has aroused renewed interest in problems relating to price supports for farm products by indicating that the system now in use should be studied with a view to revision. This suggestion of the possibility of change has been met by loud protest. It is feared that revision means less protection for farmers. This fear is easy to understand. It took ten years to secure a law which effectively provided for price supports. Hard work by the farmer leaders, inside and outside of Congress, and the switching of millions of votes of farmers from the Republican to the Democratic party were required to accomplish that end. The return of the Republicans to power and the statements by Mr. Benson, the new Secretary of Agriculture, which were interpreted by the press as inimical to full price supports, could but irritate and excite the farmers.

Those who oppose a change in farm policies would not be so much excited over statements made, or conclusions assumed to have been implied, in the addresses and statements of Secretary Benson if they understood the limitations under which a Secretary of Agriculture functions and how much time it takes to change the policies and the action programs of the federal government. The Secretary is an executive officer. Congress sets the metes and bounds of his movements. The ghost writer who prepared the annual reports for seven Secretaries of Agriculture from 1924 to 1951 once said, "It makes little difference what a new Secretary of Agriculture thinks about the various federal policies and activities when he enters that high office. Once he takes the helm of the United

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States Department of Agriculture he cannot ignore the objective situation in which he finds himself. He finds it necessary to act in harmony with plans which have been approved by Congress. Of necessity he works through the agencies which have been set up by Congress. He cannot ignore the scientific findings of the department staff. He cannot ignore dominant public opinion." The activities of Secretary Benson relating to farm price supports have conformed to this view.

If the farmers of the nation understood how dependent the Secretary of Agriculture is upon Congress and how carefully Congress responds to dominant public opinion, they would calmly keep their representatives in Congress fully informed of their desires, and not fear calamity because of a speech by a Secretary of Agriculture, made before he is fully settled into his job. Of course, a wise Secretary of Agriculture may in time influence Congress if he has adequate following from the farms. But this takes years. It would seem wise at this time, therefore, for the farmers to keep cool and agree to the reviewing of federal farm policies with some thought toward finding something which will suit them better than the present system of production control and price supports, which is not without faults and carries with it loss as well as gain.

The re-thinking of the farmer's price problem is much more than a task for farm economists and farm leaders in and out of Congress. It is a problem of great concern to the whole nation. In its full significance it involves the whole problem of the interoccupational distribution of the national income. It involves the question of whether we are to remain a free people or drift into some type of totalitarianism which we have been going far to fight.

Government limitation of production and commodity price supports in agriculture, carried forward as a permanent system, would imply tacit approval of limitation of competition by business enterprises and organized groups of wageworkers. This would mean the abandonment of the competitive price system and a call for more and more government control of prices in the interest of fair play. Is the government wise enough to administer the distribution of the whole national income, do justice to all occupa-

tional groups, and conserve efficiency and balance in production without price as a guide to individual producers? If wise enough, have those in charge the courage to resist the unbalancing influence of pressure groups, each seeking more and more for itself at the expense of others? The available answers to these questions do not look promising. It is fairly clear that any system of government management of the distribution of incomes through price, wage and profit controls would require an amount of central administrative power far beyond that consistent with democratic government. There would be danger that the strongest group might take over the control in its own interest.

In the light of the improbability of providing efficiency and justice through government management of the primary distribution of the national income, is not the time ripe for careful consideration of the idea of securing efficiency and justice in the national economy by maintaining equally free competition in all phases of that economy? This would mean competitive private enterprise operating under equitable rules enforced by an umpire—the government—insofar as they are not enforced by individual and group discipline.

A question to consider is: can open doors be maintained for the free flow of labor and capital into all occupations? Can such information and educational guidance be provided as will result in an intelligent free flow of capital and labor through open doors, in a manner that will provide balanced production of goods and services between the occupations and will result in the interchange of all the products on a basis which will provide for equivalent levels of living for those of comparable ability, energy and activity in the various occupations?

In attempting to seek the solution of this problem of the farmers' share and the shares of others in the national income, we must face the problem as it confronts the farmer and must search for a means of adjusting the interoccupational problems in a way which will provide justice with a reasonable degree of freedom for those in all occupations. The farmer, competing with millions of his fellow-

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farmers throughout the United States and the world in the production of food and fiber for the domestic and foreign markets, cannot by himself learn what his competitors are doing that may affect the price which he will receive for the products he plans to produce for the market. Without that knowledge the farmer must proceed in the dark to make decisions as to which crops to produce, how much of each, and whether to market certain crops in their original form or to convert them into dairy products or meat. How to adjust crops to his land and labor supply, he may learn from his own experience and that of his neighbors. But to adjust production to changing market conditions intelligently calls for information beyond his range of sight.

Knowledge of the forces which determine the market value of farm products is of first importance to the farmer. The required information relates not only to probable supply but to prospective demand. The demand may be influenced by changes in the purchasing power of consumers due to unemployment on the one hand or full employment with advancing wages on the other. The abundance or scarcity of income on the part of consumers determines not only how much food and clothing they will buy, but the kinds as well. Hence, there is need for a wide range of information, which the farmer cannot secure for himself, as a basis of intelligent farm management. That farmers should produce the right amounts of the right things is a matter of public interest, as well as of great concern to themselves.

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Let us very briefly review the steps which have been taken to provide farmers with needed production and marketing information. In 1839, federal officials became conscious of the need of production and price statistics as a guide to production. More and more farmers had commenced to produce for distant markets, which they reached through middlemen. At that time, the idea prevailed that while farmers should be left free to make their own decisions on an individual basis, they should be provided with information relating to supply and price of farm products. That remained the official view for the next ninety years. During that period, fore-

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casts and final statistics of production were developed step by step in the United States and in the major countries producing for the world market. Estimates of annual production were first made in the United States for the crops of 1841. These estimates had as a base the census figures for the crops of 1839. Commencing in 1863, forecasts and final production figures were issued by the Department of Agriculture as an aid to farmers, merchants, processors and consumers in planning their activities. At that same time, the collection and publication of price statistics was initiated to show the way increases and decreases in the production of specified farm products affected prices of those products.

In the 1890's, market movements at home and abroad were studied and reports issued to help enlarge the view of the farmers and to find new markets for the American surpluses. While the facts beyond the reach of the farmer's eye were being gathered for him, he was being encouraged to study more closely the facts of his own farming through farm accounts which would help him adjust his farm management in the most efficient manner, with both costs and prospective prices held in mind.

In the 1920's, the information services relating to production and to markets, to costs and to prices, were supplemented by special studies relating to future demand. The crop production forecasts and the yield statistics were useful in making sure that market prices would conform to the actual conditions of supply and demand, but they did not provide the farmer with the information he needed in advance of planting time and breeding time. Commencing in 1923, all available facts were analyzed and integrated into agricultural outlook reports which provided information with regard to probable demand in the future when the next season's crops and livestock would be moving into the markets. Information was also secured from farmers regarding their intentions to plant and to breed. If farmers were planning overproduction with respect to probable demand, they were warned of this fact in time to make readjustments in their plans.

The outlook information was given to the farmers through the

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press and through county agents. The farmers were encouraged to combine their own cost of production data with the outlook data in projecting plans for crop and livestock enterprises in the months and years ahead. It was recognized that because of ever-changing conditions, alertness in adjusting farming to fit new circumstances would need to be a year-to-year performance.

How completely the outlook service would have enabled farmers to keep step with changes which affect their incomes, other than in periods of disaster such as generally follow great wars, is not known. That service did not prove adequate in the 1920's, but it did provide much of the factual basis for production and price control in the 1930's. The calamities of the agricultural depression of the 1920's led farmers to ask the government to take a hand in adjusting production and securing fair prices for their products.

Farmers were reluctant to give up that sovereignty over the soil which they had cherished for centuries, but they very much wanted price supports for their products. They wanted greater security against losses due to depressed and fluctuating prices. This desire for security led them to relinquish some of their freedom. Today, after twenty years of government participation in the management of their farms, some of them are asking if, in the long run and barring major catastrophes, they would not be better off with freedom to farm as they please in the light of the best possible information. On the other hand, a large and vocal portion of the farmers are not thinking in terms of the long-range point of view. They want price supports here and now. They vote in overwhelming numbers to accept acreage restrictions—with their fingers crossed, it is feared—knowing that acreage control is not effective production control. The farmers know how to increase yields per acre. A real test would be to have them vote on restrictions in terms of pounds, bushels and bales.

In the 1920's attention was turned to the prices farmers paid for what they bought, and the center of interest turned from prices to purchasing power of farm products. Doubt arose in the minds of many farmers and some officials over whether, even in the long

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run, open-market prices would be fair prices. Questions were raised as to the influence of protective tariffs upon the real income of farmers who sell in the open markets of the world and buy in protected domestic markets. Some thought was given to the influence of other elements, including industrial and labor monopolies, on the purchasing power of farm products, but the center of interest for a time was in "making the tariff effective" in the domestic market on farm products of which a portion is produced for the export market. The McNary-Haugen Bill and the export debenture plan had in view subsidizing the exportable surplus and thus advancing the domestic price to a point where the purchasing power of farm products would be brought up to parity, that is, with price rations the same as they were from 1909 to 1914.

The creation of the Federal Farm Board in 1929, at the behest of President Hoover, was an effort to avoid price supports by means of export subsidies and to solve the farmers' price problem by helping the co-operative associations to control the flow of goods into the market. Farmer leaders were of two schools of thought: those who believed that the problem of securing better prices could be solved by co-operative associations of farmers, and those who believed that a comprehensive plan operated by the federal government would be necessary if prices were to be adequately supported. Coolidge, who was thought to respond to Hoover's guidance in such matters, had vetoed the McNary-Haugen Bill twice. Hoover was convinced, however, before he became President, that something had to be done for farmers. He consulted with leaders of business who were friends of his party. The businessmen submitted a written proposal (essentially the same as Hoover later presented to Congress) to a committee composed of two general economists and two agricultural economists. The assumption in the proposal was that a federal agency with \$500 million at its disposal could stabilize the market on a satisfactory level of prices by working with the co-operative associations. Three members of the committee of economists approved the proposal essentially as presented. The fourth member insisted on including a statement over his name that prices could be supported only by sustaining losses

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and that there would need to be a means of replenishing the supply of money available to the co-operatives if they were to be able to continue to support prices.

Many people have wondered why Uncle Sam did not continue to turn a cold shoulder when the farmers asked for price supports and simply give better and more timely information to assist the adjustment of production to demand on the basis of an acceptable price. This, it is believed by some, would generate a vigorous breed of farmers. Uncle Sam finds it difficult for economic and political reasons to do this because he knows that under those conditions farmers would compete freely with each other, while there is widespread limitation of competition on the part of those who produce merchandise and transport the goods farmers buy and sell. Farmers would compete freely with each other in producing all they could and sell the product for what is offered in the market. Manufacturers take orders for or calculate carefully what they can sell at a price and adjust their production accordingly. Even though there may be keen competition for orders, there are monopoly elements in the costs common to all competitors. These common elements of cost constitute the basis on which manufacturers compete. Monopoly elements in costs become monopoly elements in the prices consumers must pay. Under these conditions a disparity between the farmer's selling price and his buying price would be inevitable. In addition to these economic reasons there are also political reasons. The votes of farmers are essential to the winning of a Presidential election, and in vast areas the farm vote determines who shall have a seat in the House or the Senate.

With these reasons for doing something for the farmer, action was inevitable. The real question was, what to do? There appeared to be two roads to the restoration of conditions under which farm prices might be fair prices: one route lay in the direction of restoring competition in other occupations as free as that existing in agriculture; the other was to provide, through effective federal legislation, a degree of artificial limitation of competition among farmers comparable to that in the occupations which produce the goods which farmers buy.

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The first road appeared blocked in the 1920's. Organized industry and organized labor were against movements along that line. Organized industry was likewise against artificial control of agricultural production and prices in the interest of re-establishing and maintaining the purchasing power of farm products. On the other hand, organized labor favored the limitation of agricultural production in the interest of price maintenance. Samuel Gompers, then head of the A. F. of L., looked upon it as similar to what he desired for labor and favored having organized agriculture act upon the same principle as that followed by organized labor. Under those circumstances the movement for price supports through limitation of competition of farmers with farmers seemed in the 1920's to be the only road that could be opened for traffic; and therefore in the 1930's, this was done. But traffic on that road has not always moved easily and safely. Some farmers would rob Uncle Sam while he is trying to serve them. Others continue in their competitive ways and have nothing to do with production control. Production control through acreage limitation has not proved adequately effective in avoiding unmanageable surpluses. How to perfect a system of artificial price and production control still awaits a clear and final answer today.

An upward trend of prices (inflation) is inevitable under the present system of artificial control of production and prices of farm products accompanied by wage control through collective bargaining with decisions influenced by strikes or threatened strikes. Here is the staircase. Organized labor presses for higher wages. Management capitulates, knowing that with wages the same for all competitors, the increased cost can be passed on to consumers in the price. Wages constitute two-thirds of the cost of manufacture. Farmers have to pay higher prices. This elevates parity prices for farm products. Workers pay more for food and on this ground receive higher wages to cover higher living costs. Again parity prices automatically rise, and thus prices rise step by step until an unbalance in parts of the economy results in a depression.

Unemployment compensation for wageworkers is of the same order as price supports for farmers. Unemployment is the wage-

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worker's difficulty, as inadequate prices are the farmer's occasion for help. As price supports help maintain prices by holding a part of the product out of the domestic market, unemployment compensation helps maintain wage rates by supplying the means of holding a part of the labor supply out of the labor market. Thus these two relief systems reduce the flexibility of prices and wages and in that way tend to retard adjustments in prices and wages characteristic of an open competitive market. These are definite steps away from the private-enterprise, open-market economy and toward a planned economy.

In thinking of the problem of securing a fair share for agriculture in the national income, with open-market prices, attention should be given not only to means of reducing limitation of competition on the part of industrial management and organized labor, but also to means of reducing what may be excessive competition of farmer with farmer.

Downward revision of tariffs on imports would stimulate foreign competition and reduce monopoly elements in prices of domestic manufactures. Closer scrutiny of industrial "institutes" supported jointly by all the companies participating in a given line of production might prove helpful. Recognizing that in modern industry labor must be organized for collective bargaining, the limiting of the membership of any given labor organization to those employed by one company, and thus the abolishing of industry-wide labor organizations, might go far toward eliminating monopoly elements in wages. So long as wages are fixed by pressure groups on an industry-wide basis, management can pass that monopoly element on to the consumer in the price, because all companies are affected alike by the extra cost involved in the higher rates of wages. Furthermore, so long as labor is organized on an industrywide basis, management will, of necessity, be allowed to collaborate on an industry-wide basis in negotiating wages. This opens the door for other collaboration.

It has been demonstrated that where labor is organized on a company basis (now illegal), the mutual interests of labor and management can be considered in determining the policy to be

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followed by a given company. In a case which occurred before company unions were made illegal, representatives of labor sat with representatives of management in deciding what to do when demand fell off because of a decline in the purchasing power of those who used the product. The choice had to be made between cutting down on production, which meant seriously reducing the labor force, or reducing prices to meet the market condition and maintain the rate of sale. The latter could be done only by reducing the rate of wages as well as the rate of profits. By working together, labor and management reduced costs and prices, maintained a high level of employment, maintained "real wages" at a reasonably high level; and simultaneously, the adoption of the policy of flexible prices, wages and profits was of great benefit to those who bought the product of that company, most of whom were farmers.

It is believed that if labor organizations were limited in size to the number employed by one company, there would be enough competition between the companies, through joint agreements between management and labor, to eliminate a large part of the monopoly element in the price of the product. This in itself would go far toward reducing the discrepancy between the prices farmers receive and the prices they must pay for the goods and services they buy. Furthermore, full employment in the city industries at moderate wages (wages which have flexed down as much as the cost of living has gone down) provides a better market for farm products than maintaining an inflexible wage rate with a fourth of the workers unemployed. The inflexible wage rate in a depression means that while those out of employment are in poverty, those who have work may be getting "real wages" far above what they had received in a period of prosperity and full employment. Furthermore, taking the monopoly element out of the prices of things farmers buy would in the long run increase sales of goods to farmers. This would make it profitable to expand employment in industry, commerce and transportation, making room for more of the excess rural people in the city industries.

There are at least three reasons for a flow of labor from country to city. First, as farming ceased to be a self-sufficing economy and

#### UNCLE SAM AND THE FARMER

became more and more a commercial economy, much that was once done on the farm was transferred to the factory; second, with the modern mechanized type of farming, fewer farmers can farm all the land and produce all the farm products needed by city folk; third, the birth rate on the farm has been higher than in the city. To maintain a balance, therefore, there must be a continual flow of surplus farm population into the city occupations.

To maintain this flow at a rate which will preserve the right balance between country and city, two things are essential. There must be on open labor market in all other occupations, accompanied by education for and guidance of the surplus farm population into available jobs.

The United States Department of Labor has made a good start in assembling and publishing occupational outlook data and in providing, in co-operation with the school systems of several states, aptitude tests and vocational-guidance counseling. These services, when further developed and extended to cover generally the rural high schools as they have been in a few of the states, will do much to stimulate and to guide the flow of surplus rural youth into the town and city occupations for which they are best fitted and where they are most needed. At present, resident centers and job training in these centers are not provided for. They should be reconstructed with, perhaps, more local initiative and participation than was true in the N.Y.A. experiments. Furthermore, nation-wide statistics on occupational intentions of high school students, as well as occupational opportunities for them, would add greatly to the information essential to wise vocational guidance. The guidance counselor in any given high school or college needs to know how many of those desiring to go into a given occupation have a good prospect of securing employment in that occupation. Such services providing for the freer movement of workers could do much to help maintain a proper distribution of the labor force among the various occupations. This would go far toward insuring an equitable distribution of the national income among those employed in the various occupations.

Another means of reducing excessive competition of farmer with farmer, and thus helping to bring about equal degrees of competition in all occupations, is the elevation of the standards of living of farm families. This does not necessarily follow as a result of increased income. Price supports which result in net incomes for farmers beyond their accustomed standard of living do them no permanent good unless accompanied by stimuli which lead them to enhance their levels of living to absorb the new increment of income. Otherwise the new increments will be lost through the results of increased competition of farmer with farmer. It is a well-known fact that enhanced income beyond the accepted level of living stimulates competition for farm land, which drives land values up and absorbs a part of the new increments of income. In a dairy district the price of cows first absorbs the overflow, but in time the land, too, assists this absorption.

An adequately enhanced level of living, demanded by farmers, is essential if in the long run farmers are to secure and benefit by parity prices. Without parity standards or level of living, efforts to provide parity incomes will not adequately benefit farmers, because the income in excess of the accustomed level of living will overflow. Farmers cannot catch and hold a four-quart income in a three-quart standard of living. Hence, associated with means of improving farmer incomes should be a well-developed plan for elevating living standards. The old proverb—"You can't eat your cake and have it"—was useful when applied to the winter's food supply on the self-sufficing farm of one hundred years ago. In the commercial economy of today, the farmer must eat his cake to have it. When farmers set high levels of living as the basis on which they compete with each other and will positively seek other occupations if that standard cannot be secured on the farm, there will be reason to hope that farmers may receive and benefit from a fair share of the national income. But an adequate movement of surplus farmers out of agriculture cannot take place unless there are open doors and knowledge of opportunities in other occupations.

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It is believed by some home economists that a much higher proportion of the increased income of farmers during World War II

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went into improved living conditions than was true during World War I. Rural electrification has done much to open the way for higher levels of living on farms. The fact that electricity on the farm made possible many facilities not otherwise available was an important factor in promoting better living standards. Improved high school facilities for rural youth have been another factor in improving living standards of rural people and in training youth for a wider choice of occupations. Then, too, memories of the depression in land values in the early 1920's gave pause to overreaching in the buying of land. This made it easier to use the money for elevating the level of living. Yet the price of farm land has gone up 174 per cent since 1940, and farm-mortgage indebtedness was 50 per cent higher at the end of 1952 than at the end of 1945. These increases would doubtless have been greater had there not been educational work done with farmers and moneylenders to retard excessive evaluation of land as a basis of loans.

These are only samples of the kind of things which might equalize the freedom of competition in the various occupations, with the hope that competitive prices in the open market would provide an equitable distribution of the national income.

In the meantime, with conditions as they are, price supports for farm products are both an economic and a political necessity, and the problem remains of how best to provide that service, pending the time when enough progress shall have been made toward fair prices for farm products through equally free competition in all occupations or through other means, to justify farmers in giving up price supports for their products.

The people of the United States must choose between working carefully, patiently and effectively to maintain free enterprise and free open markets for capital, labor and goods on the one hand, and on the other a federally controlled economy in which free enterprise and many other freedoms will gradually disappear. The Farm Bureau Federation has for fifteen years publicly stated that if those in other occupations would compete as freely with each other in producing and pricing their products as do the farmers, the Farm Bureau would ask the government for nothing but full information for the farmers. There has been no favorable response.

The writer has asked three presidents of the American Economic Association to include on its program a discussion of the inter-occupational distribution of the national income. Not one of the three favored including the subject. In discussing this subject with a former editor of the American Economic Review, that prominent economist said, "Oh, Taylor, you had better stick to your agricultural economics." I apparently failed to enable him to see that a fair distribution of the national income between occupational groups was the very essence of the farmers' price problem.

This lack of interest in the interoccupational distribution of income is due to the high degree of specialization in the training and work of economists. The national and world economies have grown so complex that such specialization has seemed necessary. However, along with specialization in subject matter goes specialization in interest and attention. Most academic economists in the United States today are specialists in some field. Outside of the educational field, great numbers of economists are employed by associations, by processing and manufacturing concerns, by transportation and merchandising companies, by banks and by many agencies. All these are employed to concentrate their attention upon the problems and the subject matter in which their employers are specifically interested. The many specialists and a few general economists make up the membership of the American Economic Association. I have been a member of this group for fifty years. During this time, I have come to realize that the long-run best interest of the farmers cannot be attained through class conflicts, no matter how successful.

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The right solution of the farm problem and of the labor problem in general must come through a statesman-like program seeking the welfare of all the people in all occupations. The starting point for such a program is an objective study of the interoccupational distribution of the national income. This is not a one-man job. It is a task for a commission made up of specialists, general economists, men of affairs and statesmen who will use scientific methods of assembling facts and philosophical methods of group thinking. Only in this way can we insure the maintenance of a national economy in which free men may live in a democracy.

## The New Radio Astronomy

BART J. BOK

A YOUNG SCIENCE is coming of age. Only a little more than twenty years ago, Karl G. Jansky of the Bell Telephone Laboratories found the first evidence for the existence of radio signals from outer space. Before World War II, few would have dared to predict that by 1954, radio observatories with a great variety of equipment would be in operation in several countries.

Our knowledge of the universe of stars and galaxies has been growing steadily since Galileo first turned his telescope to the heavens. Through the old astronomy we have found ways of learning much about the sun and its planets, their motions as well as their physical conditions. We have explored far into the arrangement of the stars in the Milky Way and in the distant galaxies. Spectroscopy and photography have revolutionized astronomy, and brought about an ever-increasing understanding of the physical conditions in the atmospheres and deep interiors of the stars and in the tenuous clouds of gas and cosmic dust particles that thinly occupy the vast spaces between the star-suns.

Before the days of radio astronomy, all this information about the sun and the planets, the stars and the nebulae, was obtained by observation of the radiation in a narrow range of wave length. The light that comes to us from the far reaches of the universe arrives at the earth in the form of electromagnetic waves. Our eyes are sensitive to waves with wave lengths ranging from a little less than two to a little over three one-hundred-thousandths of an inch. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, light waves outside this very limited range were inaccessible to us. Photography has made it pos-

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sible to extend our observations to the violet of blue light, to radiations of shorter wave lengths; and photography aided by heat-measuring devices permits us to study the radiations in the infrared, on the long wave-length side of the red rays. But the ozone of the upper atmosphere cuts out the waves from outer space in the deep violet, and the water vapor of the earth's atmosphere does the same for the far infrared.

Notwithstanding the new aid from high-altitude rockets, we are still limited for photographic and for visual work to a range of the electromagnetic wave spectrum that lies between one-half and twelve one-hundred-thousandths of an inch. In the language of sound and music, we call one octave a ratio of a factor of two in the wave length of a sound vibration. Applying the concept of the octave to the electromagnetic spectrum, all of our knowledge derived from visual and photographic research of the heavens comes from a thorough study of a little less than five octaves of the electromagnetic spectrum. Most of it comes from the single blue-to-red octave to which the human eye responds.

The new and young science of radio astronomy had its birth when radio engineers discovered that the earth's atmosphere was transparent to radio waves over a wide range of wave lengths and that radio radiations from outer space were actually reaching the antennas at the surface of our earth. These radio signals from outer space have been found capable of penetrating the earth's atmosphere over the entire range from wave lengths of the order of 1 centimeter to 30 meters, corresponding to a ratio of 3,000 to 1 between the longest and shortest wave lengths, or 12 octaves of the electromagnetic spectrum. In terms of wave length, the radio window through which we may observe the universe is very much wider than the optical window. The radio astronomer at his electrical recorder, who watches the pen of his instrument trace the graph that represents a part of the story of the radio universe, cannot help but glory in his good fortune, belonging as he does to a generation that has been rather unexpectedly provided with new tools and with a broad, fresh range of spectrum through which to explore the universe.

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The thrill we feel is akin to that of Balboa first sighting the Pacific Ocean. For untold centuries the radio radiations from the sun and the universe have been striking the earth, unknown to man and beast, and we are just now becoming aware of the vast yet unexplored body of data that awaits detection, measurement and analysis.

As his primary tool, the radio astronomer uses large dish-shaped, parabolic antennas, coupled with sensitive radio receiving and recording apparatus. The signals from outer space are weak; and detecting them and precisely measuring their strength call for the best in radio and recording equipment. The astronomer, whose knowledge of electronics is all too often rather meager, has had to depend on the physicist and electronic engineer to build and help operate the electronic heart of the radio telescope. The advance of the science—or perhaps we should more fittingly say the art—of radio astronomy has been in the hands of physicists and electronic experts. But quite often the lone laboratory scientist has found the going rough—or very expensive—and in many cases the electronic industry has been called upon to assist in the execution of delicate electronic assignments. Radio astronomers are fully aware of the generous contributions made by industry, without which many recent developments would have been impossible.

For good "reception" of the "programs" broadcast by interstellar matter and by radio stars, we require, in addition to the very best in electronic equipment, really large antennas, sometimes called "mirrors." There are two good reasons why small antennas simply will not do for most types of research in radio astronomy. First, we need to catch and concentrate radio rays over a considerable area of reception if we wish to have a reasonably strong signal for our electronic equipment. This is especially so at the shorter wave lengths, one centimeter to one meter, for which the intensity of the galactic radio signals is very weak indeed. Second, we must have these large receiving antennas if we desire to have reasonably high resolution, which is the ability to see small detail clearly and sharply. The large radio mirrors are really very crude in comparison to the

conventional ones used in standard optical telescopes. A 25-foot radio mirror, operating at a radio wave length of 20 centimeters, would observe two radio stars the apparent size of the moon and separated by twice their diameter as little more than one single blur. It takes a 50-foot radio mirror to begin to show them as separate and distinct radio stars.

Large radio mirrors are now in operation or under construction abroad in Great Britain, Australia and Holland. The largest radio mirror soon to be in operation is the 250-foot paraboloid now being built for the Jodrell Bank Station of the University of Manchester in England. The largest antenna in the United States is the 50-foot parabolic radio mirror at the Naval Research Laboratory in Washington, D. C. It is a marvelous instrument, but if the United States wishes to have a ranking position in radio astronomy five or ten years hence, we have no choice but to start thinking right away in terms of one or more 250- to 300-foot mirrors. Fortunately this is well realized by those concerned with the planning for the scientific future of America, and our National Science Foundation is taking the lead in urging astronomers, physicists and electronic engineers to put their heads together now to consider precisely what types of large instruments will be most useful for future research, what the cost of such instruments will be, and where they should be mounted. When one comes to decide upon the location of a large radio telescope, there is no reason to favor the clear skies of the Southwest over the more clouded climate of the East, since radio waves at almost all wave lengths reach us undisturbed through a cloudy sky.

Through radio astronomy, young as the new science may be, we have already learned much that was hitherto unknown about our universe. Perhaps the most significant discovery that has been made is that our radio sky looks very different indeed from the familiar sky of astronomy.

The sun is there all right in the radio sky, but at some wave lengths—especially those in excess of one meter—the radio telescope records it with an apparent diameter from four to five times

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as big as that of the sun as we see and photograph it day after day. At wave lengths of a few centimeters, on the other hand, the radio sun appears to be not very much bigger than the traditional sun. Why should this be so? The best explanation offered thus far runs somewhat as follows: At centimeter wave lengths, the radio radiations come principally from the lower atmosphere of the sun, and these radiations pass relatively undisturbed through the thin outer parts of the sun's atmosphere, its corona. Hence, the sun seems to be of about normal size. When we turn to the meter waves (and longer), the corona itself becomes a powerful transmitter, and hence the sun appears much larger. By radio methods we are thus studying radiation reaching us from the outermost parts of the sun's corona. The outer corona has hitherto been observable only at times of total eclipse, although the inner corona can now be studied optically from mountain observatories.

A second important property of the radio radiation from our sun is that it is highly variable in intensity. We would be very much surprised—and, incidentally, burned to death—if the sun's radiation in the optical range were to be subject to sudden increases by a factor of one thousand or greater. Most of the excess radio radiation—the emission above the normal average level of the "quiet sun"—is apparently associated with flares and outbursts of various sorts localized on the sun. Co-ordinated solar and radio research has shown that the appearance of a visual solar flare heralds the onset of a violent radio disturbance on the sun.

It would lead us too far to report here on the terrestrial—iono-spheric and atmospheric—phenomena that are associated with solar flares and enhanced radio radiation. But it is not difficult to understand that the study of the sun by optical and by radio means is an important field of research for those interested in long-distance radio communication.

The study of the radio sun does not really prepare the uninitiated for the surprises that come when he hears for the first time about the results of radio studies of the universe of stars and nebulae. There is one cheerful and reassuring fact to report first of all:

The band of the Milky Way is shown clearly at all radio wave lengths. When, however, we look for the familiar stars and constellations, such as the Big Dipper or Orion, we find these lacking in the radio sky, and a wholly new pattern of "discrete radio sources" presents itself! Next we find that the gas of interstellar space appears to be the source of detectable radio emissions; but here again, the optical information serves at best only as a partial guide to what we learn by radio methods.

We begin our discussion by considering first the radio observations of the neutral hydrogen gas. Most of the matter in interstellar space is probably gaseous; and, according to the best available estimates, the total mass of the interstellar gas is a sizeable fraction, ten per cent or more, of all matter in the stars of our Milky Way system. Probably as much as three-quarters of all interstellar gas is composed simply of neutral hydrogen atoms, which still have the negative electron neutralizing the positive charge of the nucleus. While the high abundance of hydrogen has long been recognized, the older observations dealt only with highly excited or with ionized hydrogen clouds, the latter composed of positively charged hydrogen nuclei and unattached free electrons. It was left to radio astronomy to provide a means for the detection and study of the neutral hydrogen in our Milky Way.

It all began at an astronomical colloquium held in 1944 in Holland during the Nazi occupation, on which occasion H. C. van de Hulst reminded his listeners that the neutral hydrogen atom in its lowest level of energy could have the electron with its magnetic axis either parallel or opposite to the magnetic axis of the nuclear proton. On very rare occasions, the electron would flip over from the state of parallel magnetic axes—with the slightly greater "rest" energy—to the lower energy state of oppositely directed magnetic axes. If such a flip-flop were to take place, radiation would result, and the wave length of the excited radiation would fall in the radio range near 21 centimeters. Van de Hulst reasoned that in spite of the rare occurrence of such an event, there would be enough neutral hydrogen atoms performing at any one time in the vast spaces between the stars for the resulting radio radiation to become detectable.

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The first research group to be successful in the detection of the 21-centimeter radiation from neutral hydrogen was the Harvard pair of physicists, Edward M. Purcell and Harold I. Ewen. They succeeded first in recording these radio waves in the early spring of 1951, and their discovery was promptly confirmed by the Dutch and Australian groups. In the almost three years that have elapsed since the detection of the 21-centimeter radio line, much progress has been made in the field of instrumentation. The Dutch equipment has produced an extensive homogeneous body of data relating to the structure of the Milky Way system. Australian radio astronomers have used their equipment not only to study the distribution of 21-centimeter radiation along the southern Milky Way, but they have succeeded in detecting the radiation reaching us from the nearest neighbors to our Milky Way system, the two star-clouds of Magellan. The Agassiz Station radio telescope of Harvard Observatory is engaged upon a series of regional surveys, which have already demonstrated that the giant dust clouds of the Milky Way are also dense concentrations of neutral hydrogen gas. At the United States Naval Research Laboratory, John P. Hagen and his associates have been active in the study of radio radiations at and near 21-centimeter wave length. They have apparently recorded radiation reaching us from the very center of our Milky Way system. Equipment to study the 21-centimeter radiation is now either in operation or under construction at the Jodrell Bank Station of the University of Manchester and at the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

Why all this interest in research on the radio radiations from neutral hydrogen? In brief, the importance of this research lies in the fortunate circumstance that it permits us to observe very distant gas-clouds of our Milky Way system, which are optically hidden behind dense clouds of cosmic dust. With the aid of 21-centimeter observations, we are for the first time gathering evidence about the remote half of our Milky Way system which, as little as three years ago, seemed to be beyond all possible reach. Already the Dutch radio astronomers have obtained new and exciting information about the spiral structure of our Galaxy, and the work has really only just begun.

We turn now from the emission of a single spectrum line in the radio range to the study of the continuous background radiation from our Galaxy and of the associated "discrete radio sources." In a way, Jansky's early observations of radio static, made in 1932, showed us that the band of the Milky Way had significance for radio studies, for he demonstrated that the strongest static came from the direction of the constellation of Sagittarius. This is the direction toward the center of our Milky Way system, and the Sagittarius star-clouds mark one of the brightest sections of the band of the Milky Way as observed by visual or photographic means. The relation between radio radiations and the Milky Way became firmly established when, in 1989, Grote Reber, an electronic engineer of Wheaton, Illinois, called the "Lindberg of radio astronomy," showed conclusively that at a wave length of 185 centimeters, radio radiation could be detected from along the entire band of the Milky Way. His observations were not really checked independently until eight years later, when British observers entered the field. A considerable number of surveys on the distribution of the radio radiation from the Milky Way have been completed since 1950; one of the most recent ones has been published by John D. Kraus of Ohio State University, who has built a very effective antenna of novel design.

What is the source of these radio signals from the Milky Way? Do they originate in stars, in gaseous nebulae or in the cosmic dust-clouds of interstellar space? The presently available evidence seems to suggest that there are two or three distinct physical processes that produce the general radio radiation from the Milky Way and beyond. There is good evidence that one source of radio energy—especially in the range of wave lengths between 1 and 25 centimeters—are the ionized gas-clouds of the Milky Way. Direct proof for this assertion has recently come from the United States Naval Research Laboratory and has been followed by prompt confirmation with the equipment at Harvard's Agassiz Station and in Holland. The gas-clouds alone cannot, however, account for all of the radiation. There seems now little doubt that there is a major contribution, notably at longer wave lengths, from the radio stars,

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now appropriately and with more precision referred to as "discrete radio sources."

How these discrete sources were first discovered by Australian and British radio astronomers, how their positions were measured with amazing precision, and how the 200-inch Hale reflector at Mount Palomar has succeeded in tracing down optically the faint photographic objects apparently responsible for these radio radiations—all this could readily be the subject of a separate article or two. Here we shall have to pass over the remarkable developments in equipment that have made possible the cataloguing of close to one thousand of these objects.

At first, it seemed an almost impossible task to identify these radio objects with stars or nebulae known from visual or photographic observations. Australian radio astronomers were the first to provide us with one sure identification. They showed that the third brightest discrete radio source is exactly at the position of the Crab nebula, a turbulent gaseous nebula that seems to have resulted from a supernova explosion in A.D. 1054. It was not until the 200-inch Hale reflector entered the picture that further certain identifications could be made. R. Minkowski and W. Baade of the Mount Wilson and Palomar Observatories have searched their photographs diligently and with success for traces of objects that might be held responsible for the observed radio radiations reaching us from very limited areas of the sky. Here is briefly what they have found to date.

The discrete source in Cygnus, the brightest of all, curiously enough appears to be related to two faint and very distant galaxies in collision. These colliding galaxies are estimated to be about 200 million light years from our sun, and the radio radiation seems to originate in the turbulent mixture produced by the gases in collision. The bright source in Cassiopeia, number two in order of brightness at radio wave lengths, is of relatively local origin and is related to a most unusual variety of emission nebulosity (it looks almost like a series of scratches in the photographic emulsion on the Mount Palomar plates); it is probably at a distance of only three thousand light years from our sun. Number three on the list is the

source identified with the supernova explosion of the Crab nebula. Other known discrete radio sources are identified with galaxies outside our own, or with fine filamentary emission of nebulosity in our own Milky Way system. The striking fact about all identifications to date is that highly turbulent masses of gas are involved in every case.

Here is where we must stop our story of the birth and youth of the new science of radio astronomy. It is a great privilege to be participating in the development of a wholly new and fresh approach to the study of the universe. Already radio astronomy has extended our knowledge of our sun and has taught us much that is new about our Milky Way system. But most remarkable of all, it has given access to a wholly new species of celestial objects, the discrete radio sources, the existence of which we had not even suspected. The old astronomy is being rejuvenated by its association with the newcomer, radio astronomy.

### The Courts and Juvenile Delinquency

### IRVING BEN COOPER

T is generally agreed that no higher professional service can be rendered by the courts than the protection of individuals in the possession and exercise of vital liberty—to be untrammeled in thought, activity, and movement within such areas as the community, through law, guarantees. This involves a double obligation: to protect the individual against the community as well as the community against the individual.

As populations have increased and the tools of modern life have become power-driven, even split-second irresponsibility can have lethal consequences. Standards of accountability have been raised to levels that prove uncomfortable to many.

The immense spread in the range of criminal acts has increased tremendously the nature and number of cases appearing on the calendars of our criminal courts. These jurisdictions no longer deal largely with depraved and/or degenerate individuals—that is, with persons congenitally or by habit unable or unwilling to conform to community minimums of behavior. A large proportion of today's criminal cases concern defendants involved in strictly contemporary situations, the full outlines of which many of them do not understand, and—even more important—situations so new and uncharted that the legislatures and administrative bodies which pronounce the prohibited acts and establish regulations regarding them have not been in a position to think them through.

In his Autobiography, William Carlos Williams tells this story:

An old friend of my father's once said to me when I was one day raving against a flagrant miscarriage of justice in our local courts, "Willie, what do you think you can get in a court of law?"

"Why the least you can ask for," I said, "is common justice."

"Oh no," he replied, "you won't get justice, that's impossible. All you'll get is the best that is made available in your locality."

© IRVING BEN COOPER, formerly magistrate of New York City, is now the Chief Justice of the Court of Special Sessions of that city.

While it must always remain the function of the community through its representatives to define the areas of vital liberty, since these are the gifts of the community to itself, the testing ground of regulations is their effect on the whole social structure. Effects are to be discovered only by the patient and meticulous examination of results. The scientist can make his ten-thousandth experiment in the laboratory previous to announcing his formula or equation. In contrast, legislatures first publish the formula, after which courts are the test tubes. Society has great need for the assistance of its best legal talents to study the situations with which statutes are devised to deal. The law, like other arts, lags behind the inventiveness of matter and of human nature. It is only by returning to situations that a professional person can escape the net of his professional procedures. It is easier to fall back on his pharmacopoeia than it is to study the social structure.

When a justice begins to fear that a sentence he is about to impose cannot, in view of the known facts, be appropriate or fitting, his professional sense is outraged. Insofar as a sentence is a prescription for remedial treatment of the crime as a given personality syndrome, judges need information about the constitution of the delinquent and the extent of his moral involvement. This is particularly true for the first offender. How normal, in physical health, mentality, emotional stability and capacity for sustained effort, is he? What were the provocations provided by the complainants and by the community in which he was reared and which set the behavior patterns after which he molded himself? Were strife and thievery, as with the Spartans, the "mode" of the neighborhooda black eye a decoration and not a reproach? What of the cultural and civic resources of the neighborhood: the religious institutions in which moral values and codes are taught, exemplified and highlighted with festival? the schools, playgrounds, political clubs, public libraries, police, sanitary and other services? What effect do these have upon him now? What capacity for sound living has he shown to date? What is his ability to learn to integrate new experiences? What is his moral potential? What resources will be needed to free this potential? Who stands ready to help him? Can he learn faster in the community or does he need to be withdrawn from associa-

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tions and conditions in which his character has been formed? What kind of community will give him the support he must have? What incentives can it provide to help energize his will?

The juvenile offender has been with us since the day of Cain and Abel. The biochemistry of youth is keyed to lust, violence, acquisitiveness, tempestuous and ill-considered actions. Among the costs of carrying youth over the decade of transition from childhood into the beginning of responsible maturity is an incalculable mass of material and social wreckage—demolished family cars, increased insurance rates, wanton destruction of household, commercial and community property, medical bills growing out of carelessness and foolhardy exploits, irresponsible pregnancies and births. Families, relatives, friends and neighbors absorb a major share of these costs. This situation is age-old, and the community, in effect, has adapted itself. Crime is that one-eighth of the iceberg of human cussedness whose ravages are put down and added up in police and court records.

For every first offender brought before the court, a pre-sentence investigation ought to be a routine aspect of treatment, regardless of the degree of the crime. The objection cannot be allowed that this kind of investigation is so costly that there is no hope of its being generally applied. Lack of it costs millions in money and untold years of human suffering and community apprehension. It must be attempted, and attempted on a national scale, because only so, at this stage of our understanding of human behavior, can society acquire the kind of knowledge that will enable it to heal itself of lesions set up by cherished social habits of waywardness, greed and irresponsibility.

I do not believe that the average citizen senses the role that crime plays as a national problem. It exists on a scale so enormous that it is difficult to grasp. It can reasonably be estimated that \$20 billion annually is the cost of crime in this country. This represents a cost of \$495.00 for each family in the United States; for every \$1.00 spent on education, \$1.82 goes to crime; for every \$1.00 donated to churches, \$10.00 goes to crime.

As for figures concerning youth in crime, of the 1,110,675 persons

arrested in 1953, 7.8 per cent were under 18 years of age; 13.3 per cent were under 21 years of age; and 23.1 per cent were under 25 years of age. The group under 18 years of age accounted for 19.4 per cent of all robberies, 36.9 per cent of all larcenies, 47.8 per cent of all burglaries, 52.6 per cent of all auto thefts. Nearly one-half of the persons arrested for crimes against property involved people who were under 21 years of age.

One of the real problems presented constantly to these courts is to be able to recognize the innate potential of individual offenders for moral rehabilitation, and the kind and extent of family and community support available to them in their efforts to re-establish themselves. There is often little difference in the offenses and the superficial attitudes of persons who are widely different in their human needs. Though rounded up by the same department-store detective for the same offense, the little stenographer who is excited about giving up her job for marriage and a family; the erratic and superficially charming woman whose act is the culmination of a long and progressive series of impositions and thefts against family, relatives and friends; and the sheltered widow who, until the death of an indulgent husband, has never had a possessive impulse thwarted, represent far from identical situations.

The establishment of degree of legal culpability will not solve the problem of how these three persons are to be assisted to manage themselves and to establish a sound position in the community. Until the extent of character deterioration is known and the probable nature of the remedial measures needed to meet the condition is determined, the court cannot complete its mission with assurance.

The great mass of offenders consists of persons who have not made very good use of their opportunities and who are prone to give vent to their feelings at slight provocation. They accept the easiest way out of trying situations. They have never really faced up to life as a challenge.

A common factor in most of these cases is that, set against the life situation, the criminal charge lacks major importance. Where there is so much deep-seated misery, one additional increment does not

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seem to matter too much. The life situation may inhere in the defendant's relations to his mother or father, to his family tradition, to his neighborhood associates, to the social situation of his school or shop or other place of employment, to the standards of the community as these are reflected in magazines, papers, movies, actions of important people, envy of others. Treatment involves dealing with these primary causes.

The need of these defendants for the help of society and the court is greater than that of the morally sensitive and the family-bolstered individuals. For these misguided defendants are in great peril—the peril of rejecting and being rejected by the community.

An important consideration in the search for a remedy is the public attitude toward crime. People deny it in themselves, turn away from anyone accused or suspected, are willfully ignorant of its varieties or treatments, and prefer to believe that it does not exist. To consider crime by youth as something foisted on an innocent community, rather than as an aspect of its own thought of itself and its own action, is to be naive beyond sanity.

The community's attitude toward youthful offenders, like its treatment of youth generally, is a mixture of softheartedness, exasperation, wounded resignation and sadistic pleasure in punishment. Once a complaint is issued against the young offender, the good forces about him shrink and evil forces are alerted. Those he has injured are naturally outraged; the parents of susceptible children become fearful; the godly draw their garments around them; the evil-minded, anxious for social support, welcome a convert; and the police close in.

For his part, the slow learner will not be convinced only by statistics about proportions of good men and good women, and the availability of jobs, recreation, straight-shooting and loyal pals and friends, honorary membership in community institutions and affairs. He must experience these values—and the invitations must meet him a little more than half way. He is easily rebuffed, easily scared off, easily bored. Only as he is brought into relations of responsibility with people and institutions, and so gains a realistic acquaintance with actual social norms, can he start to build on his new evaluation of society.

The court must command his attention through the period required for him to revise his image of himself and to gain a working foothold in the community's life. The court that through its probation department can carry a young first offender to the point where he is ready to meet life's challenges "on his own" has "saved a life." This kind of working on the foundations is not done cheaply. It costs blood and money. It very seldom costs as much as one year in a reform school or a penitentiary, surely a bargain in moral healing. Over-punishment is particularly useless in dealing with youth. Ineptitude in the treatment of young offenders can easily mis-educate an entire generation.

A delinquent is usually very well aware that he has made a mess of at least one situation, and, he suspects, of others. The botched situation once was rosy with promise. But he cannot live in it any longer; he must move out into another compelling dream. A famous Scottish divine once preached a sermon entitled "The Expulsive Power of a New Affection." What the delinquent needs above all else is that "new affection." No one, least of all a disappointed delinquent, can desire forgiveness or crave "reinstatement" for more than a little while. What he wants is job status, a sweetheart, wife, children, a house and garden. These dreams, once lighted, have a steady incandescence.

The health of the community lies in the absence of disease, rather than in its resources for isolating the sick and providing for their cure. Crime is beginning to be understood as an aspect of man's mental-emotional-moral nature. This nature, assailed by many forces both within and without his bodily frame, is susceptible to many infections. Some are capable of destroying their victim, and more important still, of infecting others. Public health authorities have learned to follow a typhoid or other "carrier" from state to state, even across the nation, once they have become aware of his existence. We follow the determined offender through his finger-prints, but not the youth in his most infectious stage.

Juvenile crime is crime at the source. The youthful criminal may be self-infected, but he has frequently been infected by another, or he may have been conditioned by the mores of his gang or his neighborhood or even his family. He may even be so naive and unac-

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quainted with morality as not to be aware of his entrance into the age of responsibility.

It is in the courts that the dramas behind the figures presented in the annual reports of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and in the local police reports on which the national profile is based, that the significance of these figures unfolds and takes on life. And it is from the court records that cities, towns and villages might, if they wish, learn what kind of crimes are committed, who are committing them, the conditions that breed or facilitate certain crimes, and the community prophylaxis called for to prevent them by promoting the community's moral health and capacity to resist evil temptations.

Unfortunately for many courts, the law now provides the tool, but not the motor and the "juice" to run it. We have a one-half-where we should have a ten-horsepower motor. In other words, the law does not make it mandatory upon the community to provide the resources needed to make valid its instinct to help.

The pity of it is that there is ample good will in our states and cities to authorize the necessary appropriations. For it is not at all inaccurate to say that communities, like parents, are as yearningly afraid of youthful offenders as offenders are of them. The youth has not altogether repudiated the community, and the community has not altogether disowned him. Both are on the defensive. The youth needs assurance that he has worth and the power to compensate for his fault. The community needs assurance that the offender understands he has been out of step and that he wants to get back into line. For the community, in the shape of the parents with adolescent children, is all too conscious of the narrow line that separates its own youngsters from the youthful lawbreaker. This insight can change the community's attitude toward the court's functions and needs.

Not until courts throughout the nation are adequately staffed with the professional skills I have pleaded for will we be able to distinguish the youthful offender with good moral potential, who can be safely returned to the community to line up with the orderly citizen, from the hair-trigger, perverted or psychopathic first offender, who needs institutionalized care. Yes, "Possibilities of mur-

der and desperate love are inside all the least likely skulls." As things stand now, the courts can do little to minimize recidivism; they cannot complete their mission with assurance.

It is high time we translated into overt action that prophetic utterance by Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes:

The Supreme Court of the United States and the courts of appeal will take care of themselves. Look after the courts of the poor, who stand most in need of justice. The security of the Republic will be found in the treatment of the poor and ignorant; in indifference to their misery and helplessness lies disaster.

A judge speaks out with equal candor when he warns that we continue the present ineffective approach to these throbbing issues only at our great peril. How true the warning of 125 years ago from the London Times:

The greatest tyranny has the smallest beginnings. From precedents overlooked, from remonstrances despised, from grievances treated with ridicule, from powerless men oppressed with impunity, and overbearing men tolerated with complacence, springs the tyrannical usage which generations of wise and good men may hereafter perceive and lament and resist in vain. At present, common minds no more see a crushing tyranny in a trivial unfairness or a ludicrous indignity, than the eye uninformed by reason can discern the oak in the acorn, or the utter desolation of winter in the first autumnal fall. Hence the necessity of denouncing with unwearied and even troublesome perseverance a single act of oppression. Let it alone and it stands on record. The country has allowed it and when it is at last provoked to a late indignation it finds itself gagged with the record of its own ill compulsion.

### Arthur Griffith: Irish Statesman

### PADRAIC COLUM

In the YEAR 1899, a young man of twenty-six might be seen on the steps of the National Library, Dublin, with three or four friends about him. He was, as one of these friends noted, "stocky, straight, deep-chested, wearing glasses that hid the lurking humour of his grey-blue eyes." The squareness of his build was emphasized by the squareness of his chin—a remarkable feature. His name was Arthur Griffith, and he was called "Dan" by those about him.

Arthur Griffith was the son of a Dublin printer, and he himself earned his living as a compositor. Back from South Africa, where he had spent eighteen months working as a printer, editor, and a sort of overseer on a job connected with mines in Johannesburg, he was now ready to start a small weekly journal on a capital of thirty-five pounds.

The political situation as the century ended should be recalled. Just as Charles Stewart Parnell was about to gain for Ireland a measure of autonomy then phrased as "Home Rule," there had been the debacle in which that great political leader was destroyed. Nationalist Ireland was suffering from a sense of disappointment and loss, mixed with a sense of guilt in the repudiation of Parnell's leadership. That the country did not sink into torpor was due to the emergence of leaders who devoted themselves to causes other than the political. There was Douglas Hyde to remind the people that, as they strove for political autonomy, they were losing their cultural heritage, and to found a new and hopeful league to safeguard it; there was William Butler Yeats, directing attention to the creation of a national literature through which Ireland could express herself, and, in expressing herself, intensify her national being; there was Standish O'Grady, showing that Irish history had an antique and noble content. Though destined to make an impressive mark on the next decade of Irish history, this

② PADRAIC COLUM is a poet, dramatist and essayist.

cultural movement as yet had no great support. In Dublin a vice-roy and his court dominated the social scene; the government of the country was administered through a bureaucracy, entrance to which had for its first qualification an unyielding opposition to the national aspirations of the bulk of the Irish people. The official representatives of Irish nationalism, the Parliamentary party, itself divided, spent its time in the House of Commons trying to bring pressure on one or another of the British parties to put through a Home Rule bill.

At the time when Parnell was developing the tactics that made him a dominating figure in the House of Commons, and while Arthur Griffith was still serving his apprenticeship to the printing trade, a group of Dublin schoolboys got together to absorb the mystique of Irish nationalism from each other and from books that were in the patriotic canon. They went from reading clubs to literary societies, keeping the same personnel; about 1906, they formed the mature and stabilized Celtic Literary Society. Prominent at all stages in this development were two young men, Arthur Griffith and William Rooney. The Celtic Literary Society, for all it was worth, was back of the plans that Arthur Griffith and William Rooney now formed.

They launched a four-page weekly, The United Irishman. Rooney had an all-day job in a railway office, and Griffith kept up his typesetting. The pair wrote practically the whole of the first issues, and Griffith set up the journal. Weeklies came and went in the Ireland of that day. The United Irishman, however, had points that made for durability. Its conductors, being of "the movement" themselves, were able to appeal to the young men and women whose enthusiasm had been kindled by the new evangel. Both were dedicated to a faith in the destiny of Ireland. William Rooney was a young man of consuming ardor; Arthur Griffith, one of persistence and steadiness, who had also the equipment of a great newspaperman.

Griffith was a man of reflection and wide knowledge. Winston Churchill, who was to know him when he was approaching fifty, spoke of his deep knowledge of history and European polity. Bibliophile P.S. O'Heagerty said he "had read everything." Another

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bibliophile, Seumas O'Sullivan, noted his extraordinary knowledge of eighteenth-century literature and his ability to supply forgotten lines in obscure poets of the time, when their works were being quoted. This fund of knowledge was due not only to the books he picked up on the quays in Saturday afternoon promenades and to hours of reading in the National Library, but to a memory that was extraordinarily retentive. And his memory was not only for what he read. He had a musical bent-his mother had distinct musical cultivation—and he could always whistle jigs, reels and planxties that he picked up from itinerent players. He had access to an intellectual circle. Maud Gonne in her rooms in Clare Street received political figures, poets and scholars, among them William Butler Yeats and that brilliant young man who was to make the outstanding version in English of Plotinus, Stephen MacKenna; and Arthur Griffith had belonged to that circle. As for his physical being, it was robust then and continued to be robust. He went into the sea even on winter mornings, and in spite of his short sight was a good swimmer; with companions he tramped over the Dublin hills and bicycled through two or three counties. He played a good game of handball. His remedy for a fever he had had in Africa was to drink a bottle of quinine and then play handball for hours.

In a couple of months, *The United Irishman* became an eightpage weekly, and outstanding men of the movement, Yeats among them, wrote for it. After a few years of collaboration in the publication, William Rooney died, leaving Arthur Griffith with a deep sense of personal and national loss. But before this, in November, 1900, using the Celtic Literary Society as a nucleus, Griffith gave nationalist Ireland a new organization.

It was a union of twenty nationalist societies, and the name it gave itself was Cumann na nGaedheal (the Bond of the Gaels). The old Fenian leader, John O'Leary, was its president; it had an auxiliary, a women's organization, headed by Maud Gonne. The Cumann magnetized fresh and creative forces; the beginning of the National Theatre that Yeats was to make famous was under its auspices. Through the Cumann, Griffith, in 1902, offered the country a policy that was an alternative to an ineffective parliamentarianism and an unprepared physical force venture.

In the year 1849, Griffith told Cumann na nGaedheal, Hungary's constitution was stripped from her. Twelve years later, when Emperor Francis Joseph ordered the Hungarians to send representatives to the Council of the Empire, the elected representatives replied, "We decline to recognize the right of the Council of the Empire to legislate for Hungary." Griffith quoted a great deal from this reply, interpreting it to this effect: "We will enter into deliberations with you only as one independent nation with another. We are not the representatives of an Austrian province. We are the representatives of the Hungarian nation." After six years of coercion on the part of the Empire, the right of the Hungarians to legislate for themselves was admitted, and they, on their side, accepted Francis Joseph as King of Hungary. Griffith concluded, "The Hungarian policy is the policy for Ireland to pursue. . . . It may involve more danger and more sacrifice than the policy of speech-making in a foreign country, but it involves no degradation, no demoralization, no sinking of principle and no abandonment of ideals." The description of Hungary's liberation through moral and passive resistance was given as a piece of history. But it is truer to say that it was a parable—a parable that illuminated the policy he proposed, one which was directed not toward the measure of Home Rule which the Parliamentary party envisaged, but toward "the restoration of Ireland to the status of a sovereign state." He demanded that "the Parliamentary Party refuse to recognize the right of the British Parliament to legislate for Ireland." This meant the withdrawal of Irish representatives from Westminster.

This policy was too much at variance with what the country had been given the habit of following to be publicly considered. But a new political idea was given currency. The plan to build up the nation from within went with the time; the plan was a manly one. And there was more in Griffith's speech than recommendation: figures of resistance had been dramatically evoked.

But was there an Irish equivalent for what the Hungarians of 1849 took their stand on? Arthur Griffith maintained there was. In 1782, the Parliament of Great Britain had passed a Renunciation Act, by which it was declared that henceforth they could not have

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authority over the Parliament of Ireland. In 1800, however, the Parliament of Ireland had merged itself with the Parliament of Great Britain through the Act of Union. The greatest of Irish statesmen and constitutional lawyers maintained that the Act of Union was invalid, inasmuch as no legislative body can vote away its own existence. The same point was made by Abraham Lincoln in defending the Union: "It is safe to assert that no government ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination."

O'Connell had envisaged repeal of the Union through a vote in the British Parliament. But in appealing to that body, he renounced Irish sovereignty. The British Parliament should be boycotted, Griffith maintained, and the Irish people should rehabilitate their national institutions through their own efforts. Some time in the future, more determined and more disciplined than they were at the moment, they would do as the Hungarians had done. The policy he outlined, with its stress on self-reliance and self-respect, would be there for them then. His was a long-term policy. And like such statesmen as Cavour and Deák, he knew that watchfulness could take advantage of time and circumstances.

Later, Griffith the journalist collaborated with Griffith the statesman in the production of a pamphlet that was to have great influence. Before its appearance as a pamphlet it ran serially in *The United Irishman*—"The Resurrection of Hungary." It would be a mistake to read this pamphlet as history; it is, if one is careful not to use the word in a derogatory sense, a myth—an arousing myth. To give to a country that had accepted a dependent status and had relied on external circumstances a myth that illustrated the triumph of self-reliance, and to make that myth vivid and convincing, was the most inspired thing that could be done for Ireland at the moment.

Then, in 1905, what had been known as the "Hungarian Policy" was renamed "Sinn Fein." That title, "Ourselves" or "By Ourselves" or "From Within," was an expressive one and also possessed a public appeal, inasmuch as it could be used as a slogan. The name of the journal was changed from The United Irishman to Sinn Fein, and as the Celtic Literary Society had served as a nucleus for Cumann na nGaedheal, so the Cumann served as a

nucleus for the National Council. With a strong popular support, relying on a national discipline, the National Council now formed might be able to take over some of the organs of government and gradually oust the British from control. This, ideally, was its objective: it was the draft for a legislative and executive body. But there was not that popular support and national discipline by which alone it could function in any large way. It could, however, and did direct attention to economic and educational improvements. Griffith's addresses to it, too, helped to widen the political horizon.

From this time on, there was an eclipse of Sinn Fein as an alternative to parliamentarianism. A Liberal government had come into power but could only hold that power through an Irish vote. This was the situation that the Parliamentary party had been waiting for until the patience of the people had nearly run out. Home Rule was in the offing. The eyes of nationalist Ireland were again turned to Westminster. And so for a while we will leave the founder of Sinn Fein. But before doing this we will set down his master-idea. In words that have the depth and incisiveness of the best of statesmen's utterances, he said:

... in all political movements that succeeded the Union in Ireland no institutional rallying centre for the nation was found, and so defeat always meant rout. Ireland found temporary substitutes in great menhaving no institutional centre to form around, she formed around an O'Connell or a Parnell, and her safeguard depended on the men being impervious to the terror or the cajolery of her enemies and superior to the jealousies and follies of her friends. . . . Against an institution such intrigues and such follies have less power of destruction, and the conclusion that the study of Irish affairs forces on me is that we cannot successfully defend ourselves until we find and form within ourselves a central point from which we may advance, beyond which, if repulsed, we cannot be driven back. It is obvious that such a centre cannot be a party one—it must be national or it will be ineffective. It must be the centre of minimum agreement.

In this passage we have everything toward which Griffith's political thought was directed: a consensus through a minimum of agreement, operating through a body that would express a collectivity and, by doing so, lift the country from dependence on the chance appearance of the exceptional man who could not but have within

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him the possibility of decadence or downfall. This historic imagination, a rare faculty indeed, was needed to understand that.

The consensus that Griffith pointed toward came, but it came as a result of changes in the political scene, changes accompanied by a shift in the temper of the people. There was the formation of the Ulster Volunteers to resist the operation of the Home Rule promised the Nationalists by the Liberal government; there was the formation of the National Volunteers to keep the way clear for the projected measure; there was the formation in Dublin of the Citizen Army to prevent police interference with labor demonstrations. There was the tremendous happening of the European War. And in 1916, there was the insurrection in Dublin, headed by James Connolly, Padraic Pearse and Thomas MacDonagh.

The active leaders of this insurrection were executed, with the exception of Eamon de Valera, who was discovered to be an American citizen; and hundreds of prominent Nationalists were arrested and imprisoned in England and Wales. Less than a year later they were liberated and permitted to return to Ireland. Those who returned were broken from the political routine and wanted a more activist program. With the election of Eamon de Valera for a constituency and his refusal to attend Parliament, the way was pointed to the Sinn Fein policy. A new Sinn Fein organization was set up with Eamon de Valera as president and Arthur Griffith one of the vice-presidents. In this new organization nothing was said about the Constitution of 1783. But the idea of forming institutions that would supersede British institutions in Ireland was in the program. Later came an election that wiped out the Parliamentary party and left the field clear for the implementation of the Sinn Fein policy. The members elected on the pledge of absenting themselves from Westminster formed themselves into Dail Eireann, the Assembly of the People of Ireland.

With the establishment of Dail Eireann in September, 1919, Arthur Griffith's idea became concrete, and, if one can say it of so unassuming a man, he came into his own. He was then forty-seven years of age, married, and the father of two children. An historian looking back on the period can have no doubt about his indispensability in the setting up of an Irish state. True, without the insur-

rection and the revolutionary ferment that succeeded it, there would have been no chance—not, at any rate, in a generation—for nationalist Ireland to develop the single-mindedness and steadiness necessary to make the Sinn Fein policy effective. Through the heroism of James Connolly and Padraic Pearse and the rise of new leaders, with Eamon de Valera in the fore, the necessary psychological forces had been generated. But without the framework that Griffith's policy had offered, the revolutionary ardor would have been dissipated into mere adventurousness. Nationalist Ireland was in the mood for revolution, and the revolutionary energies had direction through Dail Eireann.

In its first session Dail Eireann did not make an impressive showing. Its attendance was sparse, for not only did the members representing Protestant Ulster fail to attend, but many of its members, including Eamon de Valera and Arthur Griffith, were in prison at the time. Its young and inexperienced members showed more enthusiasm than judgment. Still, behind them were forces that the authorities and the spokesmen for the authorities could not recognize. "The Press Gallery witnessed a solemn act of defiance of the British Empire by a body of young men who have not the slightest notion of that Empire's power and resources. The more quickly Ireland becomes conscious of the folly which elected them, the sooner sanity will return"—this was the comment of the Dublin correspondent of the London Times.

Dail Eireann was soon outlawed and forced to hold its sessions in secret. Its absence from the public scene did not abate its moral authority; it existed, and would continue to exist, undercover and in the minds of the people. A ten-member ministry was appointed, and under its direction the policy of nullifying the organs of British administration in Ireland and setting up their own succeeded to a significant extent.

When Griffith first discussed the implications of Sinn Fein as a national policy, John O'Leary had expressed doubts as to the ability of the Irish people to implement it in the face of an entrenched opposition. At that time it would have been quite beyond their ability. But now there was passion and solidarity; and these, with direction, meant the ability to prevail against opposition.

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A National Loan was launched and subscribed to, in spite of the fact that newspapers were suppressed for referring to it, that all the resources of Dublin Castle were employed to prevent the banks from handling it, and that the police harried itinerent organizers. A decree of Dail Eireann ostracized the Royal Irish Constabulary, which was used by the authorities as a quasi-military and intelligence body, and forced them out of districts which were then occupied by the Volunteers. Arbitration courts superseded the British courts in all except the northeastern counties.

After the first sessions of Dail Eireann, Eamon de Valera left Ireland on a secret mission to the United States. Arthur Griffith acted for him as president. He had a place in the ministry, of course, and presided at the meetings. But his personal influence was more important than any function he exercised. To keep Dail Eireann in existence, no matter what strains were put upon it from within or without, was his over-all concern. If the consensus that was Dail Eireann broke down, Ireland would fall back on the expedient of the hero; under a new leader's name, O'Connellism or Parnellism would dominate the country. By the steadiness of its members, and above all, by the steadiness of its deputy-president, the Dail could keep its existence and function progressively. And in all Ireland no man was more steady than Arthur Griffith. Of him the country had an image—the image of a rock.

Guerrilla warfare spread through the country, giving rise to incidents that startled the publics of Great Britain and the United States. A coalition government in Great Britain began to move toward pacification, and the Irish leaders laid down the policy that a settlement could be reached only through a treaty, thus insisting, like the Hungarian leaders of 1861, on a national status. At the end of 1920, Eamon de Valera returned to Ireland and resumed his place as president of Dail Eireann. The British government would not enter into negotiations leading to the recognition of an Irish republic, and the bulk of Irish Nationalists were not now in a temper to accept dominion status. Eamon de Valera worked out a compromise solution: Ireland should enter an "external" relationship with the British Commonwealth, being associated with it for the purpose of defense through the head of the

Commonwealth, that is, the King. And there was another major problem involved—that of "essential unity": a separate government had been set up for the six northeastern counties; how was this government to be integrated in an all-Ireland government?

Headed by Arthur Griffith, the plenipotentiaries of Dail Eireann conferred in London with the ablest team that Great Britain could put up at the time, one that included Lloyd George, Winston Churchill and Lord Birkenhead. The negotiations were long, lasting from the beginning of October to the beginning of December, 1921. The effort involved on both sides was exacting—research, organization of material, exposition, argument, dialectic, impromptu that could be pushed to some conclusion, the sizing up of personalities, the making of decisions that would lead to other decisions. What the Irish effort was directed toward was a commitment on the part of the British to "essential unity," which meant some arrangement by which the Northern government would participate in an all-Ireland parliament, or else "external association," which meant only a nominal relationship with the British Commonwealth. These were not separate principles; they were alternatives: for the sake of "essential unity," the Irish were prepared to enter the Commonwealth on the same terms as other member states; for the gaining of "external association," which was conceived as keeping the republic in being, "essential unity" could be left in suspension. But it would have to be, in Eamon de Valera's words, "either this or that." On the British side there was a limit beyond which the negotiators would not go because their party, their parliament, their public would break them if they did, leaving all that had been done in Downing Street unfinished business. Areas of agreement could be enlarged, and it was for the Irish negotiators particularly to use all their intelligence, information, skill and, ultimately, their strength of mind to enlarge them.

A minimum pledge of adherence to the British Commonwealth through an oath of faithfulness (not allegiance) to the King as head of the Commonwealth was devised. And as for Northern separatism, that seemed to be taken care of by a projected boundary commission that, it was expected, by narrowing the area under the Northern government's control, would force that government

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to make some arrangement with the rest of Ireland. It was obvious that the British could go hardly any further with the Irish negotiators. And on their side, the Irish could not venture to put their signatures on a document that did not contain either "this or that"—either essential unity made explicit or an association with the British Commonwealth that would be merely external. Then one man agreed to sign the Articles of Agreement: he was the leader of the Irish plenipotentiaries. "Do I understand, Mr. Griffith, that though everyone else refuses, you will nevertheless agree to sign?" "Yes, that is so, Mr. Prime Minister." With this decision, the first agreement in centuries between the two countries was made possible.

There are decisions and decisions: some come out of such depth of character, understanding and preparation that they stand, and, registered, make for new and transforming forces. So it was with Arthur Griffith's decision on the night of December 6, 1921. A failure to make a decision then or a decision made without the complete commitment of a wise and brave man would have left Ireland morally and politically unsure of herself. "No man and no series of laws," he had declared in that comprehensive address delivered at the first convention of the National Council in 1905, "can make a nation out of a people that distrusts itself." Sixteen years afterward, standing among the plenipotentiaries of Ireland and Great Britain, by trusting his own judgment, he did what no law and no series of laws could do. By giving the Irish people a government which would engage their faculties, and then by standing to the death for that government, Arthur Griffith made self-trust the increasing temper in a country in which initiative had been whittled away.

"Standing to the death" is literal in the case of Arthur Griffith. Nine months after the signing of the Articles of Agreement, this robust man, just turned fifty, died of cerebral hemorrhage. Opposed by the president, Eamon de Valera, he was able to get the Articles of Agreement embodied in a treaty by only seven votes in Dail Eireann. There was a split in the assembly, and the country drifted into civil war in a few months. "We have won the right of the Irish people to rule in their own country, and I am

not going to surrender that right to any junta," Griffith kept on saying, holding back a dictatorship under one name or another. He had devoted and resolute colleagues, and through their work the new state was established. But it was established amid destruction and terrorization. Worn out by his labors, enfeebled by his confinement in the government building and suffering from insomnia, Arthur Griffith, then president of Dail Eireann (Eamon de Valera had resigned when, against his motion, the Articles of Agreement were accepted), died a few days after he had been taken to a nursing home.

The ministry he and Michael Collins had headed (Collins was killed a week after Griffith's death) brought the Free State into existence. Ten years later, Eamon de Valera, who headed the antitreaty party, came into power through an election. Although certain modifications were made in the treaty, it was not denounced; the treaty signed in 1921 remained the basic instrument of an Irish polity. "I have signed a Treaty of peace between Ireland and Great Britain. I believe that the Treaty will lay the foundation of peace and friendship between the two nations. What I have signed I shall stand by in the belief that the end of the conflict of centuries is at hand." So Arthur Griffith said in moving that Dail Eireann ratify the agreement her plenipotentiaries had made in London.

As Hegel pointed out, "In all periods of the world a political revolution is sanctioned in men's opinions, when it repeats itself. Thus Napoleon was twice defeated, and the Bourbons twice expelled. By repetition that which at first appeared merely a matter of chance and contingency, becomes a real and ratified existence." The Anglo-Irish treaty was ratified for the second time when Eamon de Valera's party observed it in its main particulars: the agreement which Arthur Griffith resolved to sign, and which he and Michael Collins and Kevin O'Higgins, in the name of democracy, gave their lives to safeguard, remains, although the twenty-six counties have been named successively the Irish Free State, Eire, and the Republic of Ireland.

## ..... Under Whatever Sky .....

### IRWIN EDMAN

### Mr. First, Mr. Last

Every time there is an opening of a new bridge, a new tunnel, a new throughway, one reads of someone turning up who has long been a specialist in attending such assorted cultural premières. One reads in the news of the closing down of some century-old branch line on a railroad; or again, the last streetcar embarks on its last rumbling ride, to be succeeded by sleek rubber-tired busses. One reads of a small group of specialists in finality who turn up at these terminal occasions, these small festivals that end an era.

To one follower, at least, of our rituals and mores, this passion for participating in these surrogates for first and last things, is particularly hard to realize imaginatively, to share completely. Of the two, the desire to be present at the first occasion of anything is relatively more intelligible. In some small degree, at such moments one has the tiny intimation of what Adam may be imagined to have felt on the first day of the world. He and Eve may, it is presumed, since they were all good themselves, have displayed adequate delight in the "firsts" of created goods that were all about them. Part of the pleasure must surely have been their sense that no one had ever seen these things before. The first day of creation must have made a first night in the theater look pale by comparison, though as it turned out, there was no one but the serpent to exchange critical gossip with. It is surprising that there is no Biblical record of Adam and Eve having carved their initials on some of the trees; but then, come to think of it, they had not yet yielded to the major temptation, and so minor sins were impossible to their as yet uncorrupted natures.

First-nighters, insofar as they are there to see rather than to be seen, are a modern version of the passion to be in at the beginning. But there is a paradox in initial occasions. Doubtless the most important "first" days in history were not recognized to be such by the participants. One could scarcely imagine anyone exclaiming on some June morning, say in 1375, "Isn't it wonderful to be here today? This is the beginning of modern times!" For the fact is that one is often present at the première of something in one's era or in one's life without having the slightest realization of it. "This is the thick edge of the wedge," an elderly member of the Carlton Club remarked one morning when Queen Mary was suddenly admitted to those hitherto masculine precincts. But how often does one actually realize the beginning of the new era? Many people today felt such a sense when the atomic bomb was exploded at Hiroshima; but perhaps the beginning of that came when, almost a generation ago, Einstein's theory of relativity was announced. As for one's own life, does one really remember when for the very first time one responded to a line of poetry? Does one really recall, though one often thinks one does, the very first time (no nonsense) one had a philosophic thought or fell in love?

By the same token, one is often innocent of awareness of the last time. The passion for participating in closing events is intelligible enough. It is one-third nostalgia, one-third regret, one-third pity, sometimes tinctured with a little sense of good riddance. It would be wonderful to be present at a world peace conference and to realize that this was the last one that would ever need to be held. One knows that this final occasion has only temporary finality, that there will have to be other conferences. There is no last analysis. Nor, as a matter of fact, with respect to either personal or public events, does one often remotely know

that this is the end. One leaves a friend in perfect health and the next day one hears he is dead.

Farewell parties and ceremonials like commencements for marking the close of things are standard, but in life and history many things take French leave. There was no definite date on which there was a wake for the demise of the Roman Empire; nor, gloomy as are some of our social observers, has anybody set a date for a Black Friday to celebrate the definite collapse of civilization.

Mr. First, who specializes in beginnings, and Mr. Last, who concentrates on endings, will have to make do with small things such as the opening of a supermarket or the closing of a narrow-gauge railroad. I have good authority for believing that in larger matters it is simply world without end.

### On Flying into a Calm

Sensational evidences of serenity still are reported from Britain. Only the other day Dr. Geoffrey Francis Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury, was quoted as saying in Rochester, England: "The hydrogen bomb is not the greatest danger of our time. After all, the most it could do would be to transfer vast numbers of human beings simultaneously from this world to another and more vital one into which they would someday go anyhow." It is a lovely solace to have these comforting words from the Archbishop. There will always be an England, and happily a Church of England, and happily a Primate who can be counted on to remind us of a world of which Edna St. Vincent Millay once asked Persephone to say to a friend of hers who had just died, "Say to her, 'My dear, my dear, It is not so dreadful here." Voltaire's Dr. Pangloss went to the trouble of explaining to Candide that this was the best of all possible worlds. The Archbishop intimates that this is only the second best of all possible worlds, that there is another and more vital one to which some of us are going some day anyhow. "Why not now?" the good cleric seems to ask.

But hasn't the serene Archbishop forgot-

ten something? There is another and devilishly vital world to which some of us may go which has been in the past regarded as something worse than our present plight. Frightening as is the world we are living in, it is perhaps less hellish than the world to which some of us are destined and to which, if we have our choice, we would rather go later and in some other fashion than by way of the hydrogen bomb, and without so much company. The Archbishop would not need to be informed, but perhaps some of the parishioners might need to be reminded that this business of giving bland comfort has a long theological history. The Archbishop would doubtless not like to be classified with Job's comforters, but surely it is a quaintly calm way of minimizing the dangers of the hydrogen bomb to assure us that the worst it could do would be to facilitate a virtually unanimous escape to eternity.

The Primate has given us something to think about—but, with all due reverence, not much.

# Intimacy Coast to Coast or Private Life in the Electronic Age

That admirable and reliable commentator Edward R. Murrow has a highly popular television program entitled "Person to Person." Through the modern technique of camera and sound track, Mr. Murrow, sitting in his studio in New York, is in conversation every Friday evening with an assorted duo of eminences. Once it will be Adlai Stevenson in his home in Illinois, followed by a prize fighter; another time Archbishop Cushing in his bishop's mansion in Boston and Lily Daché in her distinguished apartment in New York. On another occasion it will be an eminent and elderly historian and a best-selling young novelist, or a ventriloquist and a philosopher. These little interviews are remarkable peeks into the private sitting rooms, almost the private lives, of public figures; and thanks to Mr. Murrow, as much as to electronics, these celebrities are displayed, apparently at least, intimately and

off-hand. For fifteen minutes one has the illusion of talking to these fabulous fellow-creatures person to person and in their own apartments or habitats.

In our time, gossip columns and personal interviews flourish for the same reason that this television program is popular. In our complicated society, we know people chiefly by their public masks, and it is a pleasure to find them, to be able to see them, for the moment *en pantoufles*, in the informality of their fourteen-room apartments, in their second-best mink coats, or in their second-best English.

Well, the thing may go too far. "Divinity doth hedge a king," but not the king who appears every couple of days on television; and, this being the age of folksy revelations about the little weaknesses of the great, very soon the king begins to be indistinguishable from the father in the family next door or in one's own. Even if the senators who appeared on the television hearings had done much better than they actually did, the Senate must now seem a little less august to millions of Americans than it did before. As for authors, it would be good for them perhaps if we turned back from their personalities, however piquant and enjoyable, to their books, which are presumably the origin of our being interested in them at all.

We have come to notice too much what is irrelevant. We ignore what matters most about the public figures to whom we are so absurdly glad to have a moment's private access. Besides, the awful surmise enters our heads that the mass-medium intimacy is not real intimacy but standardized informality; it is a public mask that has become highly merchandisable in our time. The production of that enticing personality on the television screen shows the earmarks of expert public relations. Famous actors teach a President how to be, or how to seem to be, like one of us.

It is a relief, after reading a literary gossip column or seeing a personal interview on television, an intimate tête-à-tête made possible by split-second timing and a large camera crew, to take down Homer from the shelf. We do not even know if he was one or more poets. Seven cities claim Homer as their native son, and all we really know about him is that he was blind, if we know that. But blind or not, we read him for his anonymous seeing-eye, as we read Shake-speare not to get to know the citizen of Stratford, the theatrical entrepreneur in London, but the immortal and—so far as personal gossip is concerned—virtually anonymous poet.

#### For Some Reason or Other

"For some reason or other...," my friend remarked about something or other, and I began to reflect on how often we use the phrase, how loosely we use it, and why we use it at all. We say "for some reason or other" just as I have used the phrase "something or other" in the first sentence of this paragraph. "Something or other" means "thingamabob," when one knows something, half remembered, half guessed at. "For some reason or other the post office did not forward your letter." We mean of course that there was no reason at all for their not forwarding it, or that any reason the post office might give would be highly suspect to begin with, that they might perhaps try one reason and if that were unconvincing, supply another. Often when we use the phrase 'for some reason or other" we intimate that we could give the reason if we felt like it, although we are not bound to do so at all: "For some reason or other he got married"; "For some reason or other he went to sea," or "into philosophy," or "to Timbuktu," or "into the collecting of cigar bands." We intimate that we could, if we would, give the inside story, one that would make sense of what has seemed silly or trivial or meaningless.

Both theologians and skeptics looking around at the impressive variety of absurdities in the universe have sought some explanation, some reason; but every once in a while philosophers throw up their hands and throw in the sponge and like Satan exclaim, "Chaos be thou my God," or like the Existentialists, "Absurdity be thou my reason." But "for some reason or other" this does not seem satisfactory.

## ..... The Revolving Bookstand .....

Dante and the Modern Idiom

DANTE'S INFERNO. Translated by John Ciardi. Introduction by Archibald T. Mac-Allister. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. 288 pp. \$4.50. Mentor Books. \$.50.

### Reviewed by Edmund Fuller

Let it be said at once that John Ciardi has made a major contribution to the resources of Dante in English. For this, all must be grateful, as also for the fact that beside the handsome hard-bound edition stands a massmarket paper volume.

Except for the few who may be masters of medieval Italian, any translation of Dante must be weighed as a poem in English. It is so that I approach Mr. Ciardi's work, which I think must be located in the context of other translations and closely compared to the one that most closely resembles it.

The Comedy and the Inferno (which has been more frequently translated than the entire work) have been done in prose, in the Spenserian stanza, in Miltonic blank verse, in terza rima and various compromises therewith. H. F. Cary's blank verse long held rank as the "standard." (I associate it with the large Doré illustrations which were the anatomy lesson for many of my generation.) Longfellow's version has its partisans. Of the Miltonic school, the most modern and highly praised is Lawrence Grant White's, of 1948, being the complete Comedy.

The rhymers have included Hazeltine, Anderson, Wright, and Binyon, and the most recent, Dorothy Sayers, whose version I propose to make my measuring stick for Ciardi, the more so as I find it insufficiently mentioned in the Ciardi reviews. I believe that for those most deeply interested, the Sayers and Ciardi translations can be read together with great profit. The Sayers (1949) is available in the Penguin Classics at \$.65.

© EDMUND FULLER, novelist and critic, is author of Brothers Divided, A Star Pointed North, George Bernard Shaw and other books.

Mr. Ciardi is of the compromise rhyme

school. He uses a loose stanza, rhyming first and last lines only. Where Dante ties off each canto with a single line, Ciardi finishes each with a two-line rhyme. Of the triple rhyme he says: "One rendering into English might save the rhyme or save the tone of the language, but not both. . . .Inevitably the language must be inverted, distorted, padded, and made unspeakable in order to force the line to come out on that third all-consuming rhyme."

Conversely, Miss Sayers, in a brilliant and far more extended discussion of the entire rhyming and translation problem than Mr. Ciardi offers, argues: "I have stuck to the terza rima, despite the alleged impossibility of finding sufficient rhymes in English—it is, after all, less exacting in this respect than the Spenserian stanza, which nobody dreams of calling impossible . . . the rhymed couplet, or any stanza-form other than Dante's own, involves the placing of stanza-breaks at places where he did not choose to place them. I agree, therefore, with Maurice Hewlett, that for the translator, the choice is 'terza rima or nothing.'"

Let's see a few comparative stanzas. From Canto VIII, where Dante is left trembling outside the gates of Dis, while Virgil parleys within:

Ciardi: So the sweet Guide and Father leaves me here,

and I stay on in doubt with yes and no

dividing all my heart to hope and fear.

Sayers: My gentle father's gone! I'm left distrest,

Abandoned here! Horrid perhapses throng

My doubtful mind, where yeas and noes contest.

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In Canto XXIV, the 7th Bolgia, or Bowge, the description of the Phoenix:

Ciardi: It lives on tears of balsam and of incense;



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in all its life it eats no herb or grain,

and nard and precious myrrh sweeten its cerements.

Sayers: Living, nor herb nor grain is food for her,

Only amomum and dropping incense-gums,

And her last swathings are of nard and myrrh.

Sometimes they are close, as in Canto III, among what Ciardi calls the "opportunists," but Sayers, more aptly, the "futile," who will not choose:

Ciardi: This is the place I told you to expect.

Here you shall pass among the fallen people,

souls who have lost the good of intellect.

Sayers: We've reached the place I told thee to expect,

Where thou shouldst see the miserable race,

Those who have lost the good of intellect.

Ciardi adopts a completely modern idiom. Sayers, for cause, employs some old forms, but she has retained a sense of common speech, and is as freely vulgar, where Dante is, as Ciardi. Reading them parallel, one will prefer the stanzas of one to the other distinctly, at times, and otherwise will find little to choose. I submit that, over all, they are of remarkably similar merit, and this being so, am inclined to give a slight edge of credit to Miss Sayers for her feat in employing the triple rhyme without, on the whole, any more inversions, distortions, or paddings than Ciardi uses in his rhyme form. Her canto endings have consistently better punch with the original single line.

A virtue of both versions is their admirable annotation and mapping of Hell. But I do believe that Miss Sayers' annotation excels in merit even the good work of Mr. Ciardi, and her biographical-historical-interpretive introduction far outreaches the scope of the otherwise good introduction

contributed to Ciardi by Archibald T. Mac-Allister.

Ciardi's translation may be read with a slightly greater ease and congeniality by some readers. I urge the parallel reading. Miss Sayers is working on the rest of the Comedy. I greatly hope that Mr. Ciardi is doing the same.

### An Examination of Negro Education

THE NEGRO AND THE SCHOOLS. By Harry S. Ashmore. With a foreword by Owen J. Roberts. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 228 pp. \$2.75.

### Reviewed by Priscilla Robertson

The recent Supreme Court decision disallowing segregation in the public schools will have the effect not only of freeing Negroes to attend the same classrooms as the whites, but also of forcing them to do so-of "forcing them to be free," as was advocated by Rousseau. From now on, they —especially their children—will have to accept scratches and difficulties which up to now an individual who wished to could partly escape. This is apparently the price of progress: even though the white race wishes to atone for its past sins, it cannot do so without inflicting some new pain on its ancient victims. It is our job to eliminate as much of that pain as possible, securely hoping that the wrench of readjustment will be fruitful as the misery of eternal frustration was not.

For instance, in Southern universities it is a common situation to find that some of the recently accepted Negro students have less good academic preparation, reflected in lower grades. Is it fair to grade these students by the same standard as the whites? On the other hand, is it fair not to?

Again, when certain Negro children were given an IQ test, their average score rose by seven points when the tester was one of their own race instead of white. May it not,

© PRISCILLA ROBERTSON is the author of Revolutions of 1848: A Social History. She lives on a farm in Kentucky with her three children and husband, who is Sunday editor of the Louisville Courier-Journal.

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then, do an injustice to a Negro child to make him get all his learning from a white teacher? Of course problems like these are transitional ones, but they are nevertheless acute, and they cannot be solved by any court of law.

A few years ago the Ford Foundation commissioned a group of scholars to examine Negro education, and then got Harry Ashmore, of the Arkansas Gazette, to write up the findings. The result is a readable volume, with sixty pages of statistics at the end, and thus useful both to citizens who want a bird's-eye view of the history, legal decisions, and present prospects of Negro education, and to those professional workers who need reference materials. The fact that the book was written before the Supreme Court decision does not reduce its value, since the whole tone of the work is directed toward integration as the coming step.

It was not until the thirties when the white conscience (prodded by the Negro conscience) began to try to make "separate but equal" mean equal on any large public scale. In 1935, for the first time a court granted a Negro student the right to go to a non-segregated school when no equal facilities were available. Not until 1949 was there a successful attack on segregation as innately unequal, when a Negro student was ordered admitted to a white law school on that ground.

From 1949 to 1954, Negro students have attended Southern universities with far less incident or strain than the administrators had dared to hope for. However, when Mr. Ashmore states that no public or private Southern educational institution sought to abandon segregation until the step seemed inevitable, he must be forgetting efforts by various religious schools, notably some Catholic school boards, which lobbied courageously for years to get their Southern legislatures to rescind laws which provided penalties up to \$1,000 a day for an institution holding mixed classes.

The next problem will be that of the public schools. Mr. Ashmore asks effectively, What is an "equal" school? And he points out that in the great movement to equalize

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facilities for all children, the Negro-white phase is actually a minor one. For the thirteen Southern states, in the year 1953-54, it would have cost \$90 million to bring the Negro schools up to the level of the white ones in each community, but \$240 million to bring the rural schools as a whole up to the level of the city ones, and \$1,300 million to bring Southern schools as a whole up to the average of the rest of the nation.

By far the most promising way to close these gaps is federal aid to education, long advocated by liberal Southerners and long resisted by Southern congressmen lest it bring about Negro equality. Now that their worst fears are realized anyway, they may be more willing to accept federal help.

Mr. Ashmore concludes his study with case histories of various Northern cities that have recently integrated their schools. Examples run all the way from Tucson, where careful community planning resulted in a transition without a hitch, to Cairo, where violence broke out and state police had to be called. One problem frequently met, not yet touched on by the courts, is the integration of the Negro teacher. In places where this has been tried, it has often been very successful, Mr. Ashmore's prize example being of a town where the P.T.A. petitioned the school board to rotate a popular Negro teacher among all the white schools. Another problem is that many white parents fear not so much the mixture of races as the introduction of Negro slum children into their middle-class schools.

The moral of all this is clear, though Mr. Ashmore is too objective to state it in so many words. Any community that wishes to have a peaceful transition period must plan carefully for it. In Louisville, for some years white Catholic high schools have scheduled basketball games with colored public schools, complete with athletic banquets and non-segregated audiences. It is such planning for small groups that counts. Changing attitudes is always hard, but at least some of the experimentation has been done; and some of the techniques are available for those who wish to use them in this critical period which must surely result in a stronger, healthier nation for us all.

Delightful and Instructive Colloquies DIALOGUES OF ALFRED NORTH WHITE-HEAD. As recorded by Lucien Price. Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press-Little, Brown and Company. 396 pp. \$5.00.

### Reviewed by RICHARD HUETT

In 1924 an English mathematician became an American philosopher, and all the world was enriched by such works as Science and the Modern World, Process and Reality, Adventures of Ideas and Modes of Thought. But that was not all, for there were those "evenings at the Whiteheads," when for thirteen years, one night a week, open house was held for students. As many as ninety-eight were recorded as attending these extracurricular meetings, which formed one of the glories of Harvard education.

Beyond this were the Whitehead dinners, given for fellow-teachers and close friends. The Dialogues of Alfred North Whitehead is a compilation of the conversations heard by the editor upon these occasions. Obviously, the title of these delightful and instructive colloquies was chosen by Mr. Price to evoke associations with the work of Whitehead's philosophic hero, Plato. It is true there can be no serious disagreement over the unquestionable daring and originality of the Greek philosopher, nor can we deny the fact that it is a trick of time which placed Whitehead so late in the history of philosophy—following Berkeley, Bergson, among others—as to make many of his ideas only seem derivative. The roles might easily have been reversed.

Nevertheless, I must take exception to this identification of the two men. What a vast contrast there is between the maieutic method of Socrates where, by some phenomenon peculiar perhaps to philosophy, the delivered child belongs always to the midwife, and the conversation among peers we find in the present work! Did not Socrates himself admit that he had found no man wiser than he? Nor as wise, he probably said under his breath.

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Whitehead, on the other hand, despite an ecumenical knowledge which ranged over TICHARD HUETT is a bookseller and a student of philosophy.

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THE RONALD PRESS COMPANY 15 East 26th Street, New York 10 the fields of mathematics, art, science, literature, history and politics, displays the sincere humility of one who was acutely aware of "the fallacy of dogmatic finality" and that "there are no whole truths; all truths are half-truths. It is trying to treat them as whole truths that plays the devil." Having in his own lifetime seen the certitudes of Euclidean mathematics and Newtonian physics crumble before his eyes, he forever rejected absolutes. Thus his is a progressive education that constantly kept him on the qui vive for new ideas, new insights and new aspects as expressed by his colleagues, friends and wife.

It is this willingness to listen and learn from others that affords us the wit and wisdom of the following: "Satire is the soured milk of human kindness"; "The trouble is that so many Americans want an education not for its own sake, but in the hope of getting a better job"; "Ritual has a place in life. The deference may not be for a personality, or even for the institution; but it can be for the ideas embodied in the ceremony."

This is a joyous book, abounding with that humor he found so sadly lacking in early Hebraic literature. It might displease those professional philosophers who must have in their Whitehead such terms as "prehension," "point-events," "occasions," coinages which were forced upon him in an attempt to invent new terminologies for new concepts. But the rest of us can enjoy the hilarious account of Whitehead hoisted by his own petard when his Aims of Education was instrumental in defeating the move to drop Latin as a requirement for the Bachelor of Arts degree, a position he now supported. And we can find him doubly blessed, for his wisdom and his wife, who possessed that rare collocation of intellect, wit and charm: Whitehead-"My wife . . . will correct me if I am in error?" Mrs. Whitehead -"Not publicly, my dear." How different might have been the Platonic legacy if Xanthippe were like her!

I enter one major demurrer. It has been remarked elsewhere that many contemporary philosophers have misunderstood John Dewey; and to me, Whitehead is no excep-

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tion. He actually accuses Dewey of favoring security and the status quo! In the light of the latter's repeated emphasis upon inquiry, upon experiment, and upon adventuring with ideas, Whitehead's conclusion becomes a non sequitur.

Above all, however, is the leitmotiv, the central idea reiterated throughout the Dialogues: that this is not a static universe, but one where process is the actuality, whose possibilities are infinite, and in which the individual is unique and unpredictable. Relevant to this is Whitehead's observation that the present generation has failed to establish a hierarchy of values, that for it there is no difference between "one fifteen minutes and another, so long as it is enjoyable." Implicit in this situation is a spiritual inanition leading to moral chaos. A fortiori, then, we need the affirmation of life's limitless potentiality and of man's untapped reservoirs of power. Like Blake, Whitehead asserts the existence of a universe in the smallest particle of matter, and a God immanent everywhere as a creative principle in constant process. Man's real function and destiny lie in his participation in this continually creative act; this gives him his "dignity and his grandeur."

The temptation to cite from this book is powerful to the point where in order to exorcise it, it must be proclaimed there is scarcely a page that does not beg for quotation. It was Kierkegaard, I believe, who once gave vent to an epigrammatic disdain of professors. That was before these *Dialogues* were published.

## A Punitive Expedition

PICTURES FROM AN INSTITUTION. By Randall Jarrell. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 277 pp. \$3.50.

Reviewed by Henry W. Wenning

There are almost as many good things in Mr. Jarrell's novel as there are on it. This is no little praise, since flowers of appreciation flourish like weeds on its superlatively fertile jacket.

Nevertheless, in the present case, these soft impeachments are well merited. Mr.

Jarrell has verve and brilliance in great measure, and his illumination of life at Benton College is written with decision and wit. Not all these gifts, however, can obscure a certain condition of dullness which is too frequently encountered along Benton's paths and ways. Add to its other qualities the fact that this is a book which it is impossible not to put down.

The paradox arises from a form of total and permanent disability which exists at the core of this fundamentally serious novel: the characters most essential to its meaning suffer from a lack of temperament that leaves the reader generally and quietly indifferent to their fate.

Fate, in this instance, is embodied in the person of one Gertrude Johnson, who is vigorous and aggressive enough to sustain a dozen novels, if one large woman could, by herself, accomplish such a task. Miss Johnson is a sort of bitch timber wolf, with a predisposition to literature and sharp teeth which crack and crunch the defenseless innocent and the defenseless guilty, impartially. The main line of the story has to do with her querulous journey through Mr. Jarrell's spoofed-up version of a progressive college for women. Although Miss Johnson enters upon her tour of duty in the guise of an instructor, she is in reality nothing more than a novelist seeking material for her work. In this case it is devil's work, since the lady has the purpose of making people "see themselves as they really are." This is not only a professional objective, but an avocation as well; and before she has completed her term, there is not one head left at Benton that is unbloodied or unbowed.

Since a college campus is not usually without its own sharp and sanguinary spirits, the spectacle of this quarrelsome Johnsonian unleased among the faculty might be expected to provide a more exhilarating play than actually occurs. Unfortunately, the cast of characters who fill in the pages between monologues by the author and by his leading lady absorb their punishment without retaliation, almost

O HENRY W. WENNING is a New York businessman.



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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS Morningside Heights, New York 27 without rejoinder. Since she, at least, hits with a very heavy hand, the end result has more the appearance of a punitive expedition than a witty walk through the groves of Academe. (It is, perhaps, a commentary on the selfishness of authors that Miss Johnson's wit is of the blunt instrument kind; the rapier variety is reserved exclusively for the author's own use, in much the same way that an actor-playwright might be expected to save the very best lines for himself.)

Needless to say, Mr. Jarrell does not share this dispirited and perhaps distempered view of his creatures. Several of them are conceived as intelligent and kindly human beings, and it would appear to have been Mr. Jarrell's conviction that they would, if not defeat, at least balance Miss Johnson's stridently negative attitude. These include, among others, the Whittakers: a pair of unworldly sociologists, who are innocent in thought and word, absorbed and vague to the degree that "Jeremy Bentham's stuffed body would not have looked ill at ease in their house"; and the Rosenbaums: refugees, musicians, creators—and counter-Johnsons in the matter of intellectuality, although the acuteness of their observations will sometimes evade the reader. Finally, there is Constance, the comprehensive embodiment of youth and beauty and gentle nature; or so the tale is told. Actually, Constance is so impalpable and so finely wrought as to escape completely any sharp individualization. Constance is as lonely as a cloud and just as aqueous.

It is the failure of Mr. Jarrell's comedy, I think, that none of these characters really comes up to scratch. If he had been able to clothe his "kind and clever" men with the same corporeality that Miss Johnson wears so impeccably and unmistakably, this would have been a novel out of the ordinary.

# Brief Comments

FREEDOM, LOYALTY, DISSENT. By Henry Steele Commager. Oxford. \$2.50.

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protests against the threats to liberal democracy piling up in our time. His defense of our traditional Western freedom for individual variation in thought and the necessarily related individual and group freedom for experiment in action is basically pragmatic: they have worked, and still work, better than systems which deny or radically curtail them. These freedoms keep society alive; while uniformity, conformity, universally prescribed, simply kill. The free have beaten the unfree—or at least the excessively disciplined—in the last two great wars.

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The vehemence and emotional depths of the commitment of men like Professor Commager perhaps make his work inevitably a polemic, and perhaps the polemic must be as eternal as he believes it to be. Perhaps we can alert the younger generation only by some overemphasis, some excited quality of our own.

C. B.

THE REASON WHY. By Cecil Woodham-Smith. Illustrated. McGraw-Hill. \$4.00.

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V. W. N.

BLEEDING KANSAS. By Alice Nichols. Oxford. \$4.50.

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would have prevented this from happening.

This book should be pondered by all Americans, but particularly those who still make heroes and martyrs of men who ignore traditions of legality, fairness and decency, and do evil for the good they think will follow—with some publicity in the bargain—whether it be John Brown or modern variations of his type.

R. L. M.

EUROPEAN THOUGHT IN THE EIGHT-EENTH CENTURY. By Paul Hazard. Yale. \$6.00.

This is an essay on ideas in the Age of Reason. Ideas appear as events in a sequence, or rather, as integers in a process of subtraction and addition. While Christianity is called upon to justify itself, deists and atheists seem to triumph; then they too are shaken by doubts. In a world where All is manifestly not Right and no one is really happy, it is suspected that Reason is not enough. The Age of Sensibility is just around the corner, with all the violence attendant upon revolution. Although the kings are now pleased to be called philosophers, it will not be long before they will form an alliance to destroy Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

Dr. Hazard surveys this landscape as one who is passing through it. Readers who are already acquainted with Locke, Diderot, Voltaire, and their contemporaries may find this summation of their works surprisingly superficial. In the very sweep of the view, where one landmark dovetails into another, nothing seems of permanent importance in itself.

L. S.

THE MEASURE OF MAN. By Joseph Wood Krutch. Bobbs-Merrill. \$3.50.

During the twenty-five years which have passed between the publication of Mr. Krutch's *The Modern Temper* and his new assessment of the time, the author has not radically altered his views; but he has shifted their statement from a minor to a major key. Our prevalent mood, he believes, can be described by calling our time an

"Age of Anxiety." This anxiety springs chiefly from the spread of a determinist philosophy—through Darwinism, Marxism and Freudianism—which, in opposition to our personal experience, persuades us that our fate does not lie in our own hands.

Pursuing the source of our prevalent anxiety to lesser lights, Mr. Krutch attributes much of it to determinist sociologists and educators. Although he wins a number of victories over these "social engineers," he nowhere demonstrates that the anxiety of our generation has been fostered by them. The positive and heartening conclusions are based upon man's general awareness that, as a matter of personal experience, he often makes decisions, chooses among alternative courses of action, prefers one thing to another, and distinguishes between what he feels or perceives to be good and evil, beautiful and ugly, true and false.

It should be noted that Mr. Krutch does not follow up his rejection of scientific dogmatism by embracing mysticism or theology. While issuing his call to hope and courage, he stands squarely on humanist grounds.

M. L.

BOTTLE IN THE SEA. By Albert Guérard. Harvard. \$3.50.

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H.H.

THE ORIGINS OF PSYCHO-ANALYSIS. Letters to Wilhelm Fliess, Drafts, Notes: 1887-1902. By Sigmund Freud. Edited by Marie Bonaparte, Anna Freud, Ernst Kris. Translated by Eric Mosbacher and James Strachey. Basic Books. \$6.75.

This unique volume presents the almost complete although one-sided correspondence of Sigmund Freud with Wilhelm Fliess, whom he regarded as his closest confidant during the most creative period of his life.

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Freud comes to life in these spontaneous, frank and intimate letters and thus becomes his own eloquent biographer. Filled with tenderness, delicious humor and candid self-appraisal, they show us at times a petulant child, hurt, arrogant, or heroworshiping. The fundamental picture, however, is the warmly stimulating, creative philosopher, often despairing, but always searching and finding a way back to himself and to his work.

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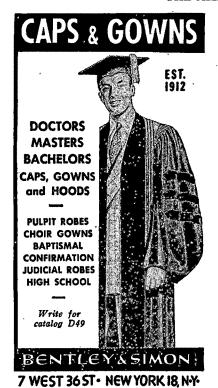
Issued quarterly (in January, April, July, and October)
Subscription, \$5.00 a year in the U. S.; \$5.50 in Canada; \$6.00 foreign;
Single issues through Vol. 12, \$1.00; subsequent single issues \$1.25
Index to Volumes 1-10, 75 cents

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cent biography by Ernest Jones and with Freud's formal psychoanalytic writing, is of inestimable value for the student of psychoanalysis. But its greatest value is as a vibrant demonstration that creative work and genius are the result of foolishness and despair, of work and courage, and not a magically granted gift of the gods.

N. K.

THE HEDGEHOG AND THE FOX, By Isaiah Berlin. Simon & Schuster. \$2.50.

The Hedgehog and the Fox derives its title from an aphorism of the Greek poet Archilochus—"The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing"—, which Mr. Berlin uses to identify what seems to him the profound chasm between those writers and thinkers who relate everything to one central vision or system and those who are acutely aware of the variety of experience and who do not try to fit that vital miscellany into one pattern. He examines Tolstoy's philosophy of history and that of the French ultramontane Catholic of the early nineteenth century, De Maistre.

De Maistre believed in Thomistic logic, Tolstoy in empirical facts, but both were suspicious of neat formulas, the fashionable systems, and the clichés of science or liberalism or determinism. Though Tolstoy's disquisitions on the philosophy of history are generally regarded as interruptions to his real triumphs in War and Peace, Mr. Berlin makes out a very good case for the fact that a philosophy of history is really what that novel is about, the relation between the living facts of private human experience and the public formulas of explanation. Like the fox, he distrusted everything but the actual human experience, yet he craved a synoptic vision that would give these private immediacies rational order.

dom, wit, brilliance and extraordinary erudition, compressing all into a terse yet intelligible whole and creating a small book that is a technical feat, both of writing and of thinking. He is a fox who makes the hedgehogs clear.

Mr. Berlin discourses on all this with wis-

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MASSACHUSETTS

I. E.

OF WHALES AND MEN. By R. B. Robertson. Illustrated. Knopf. \$4.50.

During a time when so many writers of nonfiction are telling of their experiences on a mountain top or the ocean floor, it is surprising that not until now has someone come forward to write of the more than twelve thousand men who go whaling each year through the seas of the South Atlantic. The whalemen themselves still read, talk about and consider Herman Melville to be their chronicler.

The relative merits of the 1950-51 whaling season, as compared with its predecessors in terms of margarine and other byproducts, may well be a debatable topic. However, there is no question but that the season made its mark when one pelagic whaling expedition hired Dr. Robertson as its senior medical officer. For as a result of his training and experience as a psychiatrist, his eye for detail, and infectious curiosity, the three hundred pages of this book are loaded to the gunwales with information about the hunted and their hunters. Although Dr. Robertson gives one an uneasy moment early in the book when he refers to plunging his "psychiatric harpoon" into a whaleman "to make fast his personality for future study and dissection," he generally follows a straight and true course in interpreting what he sees, rather than in writing factual case studies.

Every chapter deserves that adjective which is used with so little discrimination—"fascinating." But the one on "The Psychopaths," which is devoted to the doctor's interpretations of why men go whaling in the first place, is outstanding.

B. S.

THE WIDOWS OF THORNTON. By Peter Taylor. Harcourt, Brace. \$3.75.

"My people happened to be very much of the world, Miss Watkins," said Miss Patty. "Not of this world but of a world that we have seen disappear. In mourning my family, I mourn that world's disappearance." The Widows of Thornton is a Canterbury pilgrimage turned inside out, with batteries exhausted and pilgrims looking back longingly to the starting point. "I have had my world as in my time," says the Wife of Bath but the Thornton widows, mourning the dead world of Southern traditionalism, cannot echo this satiate optimism.

Yet the effect of Taylor's stories of Thornton is not one of hopeless pessimism, largely because of the multiplicity of characters. He operates with superb confidence in the realm of human personality, presenting in all its variety and richness the eccentricities of human behavior. But, fine as the surface presentation is, he makes us aware, in a somewhat Chekhovian fashion, of the real motives, unconscious attitudes and symbolic significances underlying the appearances Moreover, the characters are never so ab sorbed in their eccentricities as to lose their sense of values. They are fully aware of themselves, and, by virtue of their powers of self-analysis, are often raised from the brink of parody to a higher realm, as in the case of Aunt Bet, one of the "Two Ladies in Retirement," or the aging Negro woman Aunt Munsie. Thornton is a highly civilized, if faded, world. It is filled with a Faulknerian variety of sisters, cousins and aunts, but their actions are not made significant by violence of style and profusion of incident. Taylor achieves his effects economically, with quiet humor, and with a saving simplicity.

T. L. S.

A SEED UPON THE WIND. By William Michelfelder. Bobbs-Merrill. \$3.50.

Andrew Carew, on whose physical pain and spiritual anguish this first novel centers, is sorely tried both as a doctor and a Catholic. Two of his patients have died under circumstances that challenge his science as well as his faith; and these misfortunes get under his skin before it has been hardened by professional experience.

Father Kesslar, with his sincere and dependable faith; Dr. Andreozzi, who professes no faith at all; the inadequate Sisters; Marjorie Butler, the nurse with whom the desperate Carew runs away—as if he does not always carry the source and secret of his hurt within him wherever he goes—all these and others help and hinder the man whose

#### THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

'problem was all love, not just loving a voman."

For his subject of body and soul Michelelder has created a cast of professional men and women, but even more important, he as presented a cast of forthright and unrammeled emotions. The very substance of hese pages is feeling; and, worthy or not, at times it sweeps you off your feet.

W. G. R.

FHE DOLLMAKER. By Harriette Arnow. Macmillan. \$5.00.

This story of Gertrude Nevels, a Kenucky hill woman who is forced to leave he land she loves and enter the maelstrom of war-time Detroit with her husband and ive children, is a novel which gives new tature to American fiction. Varicolored acets of the whole spectrum of living and lying are revealed through the countless and frequently memorable characters who people the alley where Gertie tries to make a home for her family. However, it is a arge block of cherry wood, "big enough

fer the head and shoulders uv a fair-sized man" through which the reader comes to know, understand and identify with this woman whose only personal pleasure and expression is what she calls "whittlen foolishness." As life closes in on her, swirls about her, delivering one defeat after another, the figure, which by now promises to be either Christ or Judas, grows under her large, patient hands until it is complete in every detail but the face. "The man in the wood . . . seemed far away, walled off like all other life about her . . . ; the knife fumbled, a lost knife hunting a lost man in the wood; no, not lost, hiding, forever hiding."

The search for a face, the search for a reason for existence itself, is resolved in a brief and climactic conclusion, which will hold many different meanings for different readers. Mrs. Arnow and her publisher deserve the highest praise which the discriminating Gertie Nevels ever gave—"You done real good."

B. S.

# The Reader Replies.

THE READER REPLIES carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles which have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor, The AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Phi Beta Kappa Hall, Williamsburg, Va., and should not exceed 300 words in length except on request. Because of limitations of space, we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.—EDITOR.

## Practical Guideposts

Joseph Wood Krutch, in his article "Conservation Is Not Enough" [AS: Summer, 1954], sustains an admirable thesis, but it needs to be pointed up. One can agree that man ought to respect other forms of life besides his own, and still one can wish to know what to do about it. Actually, Mr. Krutch has hardly done more than embroider the principle of Albert Schweitzer, "Reverence for Life." That every living creature has as good a right to existence as the human animal is the core of the revelation that Dr. Schweitzer received while on a river trip in Africa. But he carried his logic further than Mr. Krutch has done. With his customary practical good sense, he recognized the unavoidable inconsistency in his rule of action. It is impossible for man to exist without taking other lives. Regretfully, Dr. Schweitzer kills microbes in his medical work, and animals for his meat. And so he wrote: "Man is subject to the puzzling and horrible law of being obliged to live at the cost of other life, and to incur again and again the guilt of destroying and injuring life."

Mr. Krutch confined himself to the abstract. He owes it to his readers to set up some practical guideposts along his theoretical highway. All life has a right to exist. Do we then stop trapping and poisoning gophers? Do we protect sacred cows and monkeys? Where do we draw the line? If he replies, "We shall use our best judgment as to what to destroy and what to preserve," that is what we are doing now—with mistakes, of course. If he can help us avoid mistakes, it will be by administrative advice, not by expounding a theory which involves inconsistencies.

To enunciate an abstract principle of behavior is not enough. It has to be implemented with acts. As Clement Attlee remarked recently in the House of Commons, "Agreement on general principles is a very excellent thing, but the difficulty sometimes arises in their applications."

S. G. MORLEY Berkeley, California

## Intellectual and Spiritual Ozone

In his article "A Glimpse of Incomprehensibles" [AS: Summer, 1954], Dr. George W. Corner eventually arrives at what might be called "a mood of pantheism," so expansive does he become. He handles La Mettrie somewhat syllogistically, thus appearing to lend a measure of validity to the reasoning of that arch materialist. However, Dr. Corner is adept at outguessing his reader and tantalizingly leading him on through a maze of uncertainties into a sunny glade of rounded clarification. (Let us digress a moment to say that in our opinion Dr. Corner would make a first-class suspense-story writer.)

It is good to discover a top scientist who tacitly admits the reality of an inner Light and Life, which is individually experienced and therefore incommunicable. Apparently we are all caught in a "cage of relativities." However, it is possible for the individual to transcend relative truth and rise anon into the realm of Absolute Truth. But, as said, this is purely an inner evolution and consequently not communicable in words.

All great teachers down the ages brought the same message in essence: viz., that of the intellectual and spiritual as well as the physical evolution of man, the self-conscious Thinker. This age-old, undying, ever-changing gnosis is invariably inerted and gradually reduced to sterile thelogy and ritualism; e.g., from Plato, to ristotle, to Aquinas and Thomism, comletes a cycle of deterioration.

Dr. Corner's article is invigorating—a ind of intellectual and spiritual ozone. omehow the whole timbre of his argulent reminded me of the majesty and weep of an old Vedic hymn:

Who knows the secret? who proclaimed it here?

Whence, whence this manifold creation sprang?

The Most High Seer that is in highest heaven,

He knows it—or perchance even He knows not.

B. THOMAS SHROPSHIRE Los Angeles, California

# Sinclair Lewis

In regard to my article "Sinclair Lewis: Portrait" [AS: Spring, 1954], Mr. Bernard insheimer of Hollywood inquires in your ummer issue what those "three words" rere which Sinclair Lewis wrote in my copy f his book. I'm afraid I must stick to my riginal decision not to publicize the "three rords." Someone else can tell what they rere after I've gone on—at which time they night just possibly be appropriate, proided I've worked hard, written well, and ronted life like a man.

FREDERICK F. MANFRED Minneapolis, Minnesota

 $\star$   $\star$   $\star$ The following may be a footnote of in-

erest for Frederick F. Manfred's article

Sinclair Lewis: A Portrait" appearing in he Spring issue of The American Scholar: A good many years ago Sinclair Lewis ave a talk in Constitution Hall, Washingon, D. C. (On a lecture series he followed Dale Carnegie and a large part of his talk 7as an attack on Mr. Carnegie's "philosohy.") At the conclusion of the lecture, nembers of the audience were asked to ubmit written questions. One of the questions (and recollection says the first one)

asked Lewis why he kept his hand over his mouth while speaking. Mr. Manfred may have provided the answer, as well as indicating one of the effects of the question.

Incidentally, the questions were not screened. The few that Lewis read were more or less critical of him or what he had said. Whether the chairman or Lewis ended the proceedings I don't recall, but the latter muttered something about "the insolence of ignorance."

JOHN B. CARTER Madison, Wisconsin

### A Summary of Paradoxes

Many thanks and congratulations to Alan Valentine for his wonderful satire, "A Modest Proposal for the Care and Use of Subversives" [AS: Spring, 1954]. How I wish I were presently teaching English in our public high-school system. I would substitute this timely essay for Jonathan Swift's "Modest Proposal" on the required reading list. With one clever stroke of his pen, Mr. Valentine has summarized the paradoxes of our modern concepts of Americanism and liberalism. Every young citizen of our nation should read this illuminating work. He would then be reminded of the topsy-turvy state of our democratic ideals and values.

I am looking forward eagerly to more of the same from Mr. Valentine and from the stronghold of true Americanism and intellectual freedom, The American Scholar. Your magazine is a constant renewal of faith in that old adage that you cannot fool all of the people all of the time.

PAULA LIBRETT Port Chester, New York

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## "Penny-Wise" or "Pound-Foolish"

Just as all Gaul was divided into three parts, so is all poetry divided into two parts, the kind I can understand and the kind I can't. Rose Burgunder's "Penny-Wise" [AS: Summer, 1954] unquestionably falls within the latter category.

Fortunately I have a lifelong friend in Ilo Orleans, a distinguished New York attorney who is also a poet of no mean ability. To him I appealed for an explanation of "Penny-Wise." By return mail I was favored with a letter in which Mr. Orleans confessed to a deep understanding of the abstruse abstractions of modern poetry. I quote his words below:

The poem "Penny-Wise" is very easy to understand. Perhaps you will glean the meaning better by reading my poem, enclosed, entitled "Pound-Foolish," which is obviously clear—indeed crystal clear—and bears an amazing kinship to "Penny-Wise," which inspired it.

Believing that there may be one or two other readers of The American Scholar who were as baffled by "Penny-Wise" as I was, you would serve them well by publishing this letter to which I append, with the gracious permission of the author, his poem "Pound-Foolish":

Hastening eventide, when wintertime's Dread misfortune stirs, hush (you motleygarbed pi-ped)

Unpaved is the road

On which I trap within me melodies
Unheard of oak and fang and claw.
Cast and blast beyond a brace of gophers.
The spark of distant star invigorates—
bright upon her rope—let me,
daring,

Approach her moistened nylon hose. Foam-rubber be my answer in unfathomable night of nights—

Aye, cynic's bloom—

To summer morning's platinum breeze, Pulled close to, sunken rotting hulk of gray.

I glare. I can't abide the bastards.

ALBERT L. WECHSLER New York, New York

## Another Modest Proposal

Now tell me, what's a poor ordinary guy to think?

I was moved by the pathos of Professor Riesman's apologia pro vita sua in the Winter, 1953-54, issue of The American Scholar, and, of course, was at once reminded of First Lieutenant Mr. Spoker's philosophical Captain in Stevenson's fable, The Sinking Ship.

Should we not go further than Professor

Riesman? Perhaps we should follow the example of that Southern legislator who, early one morning, was observed by a neighbor following his wife precipitately down the front steps while belaboring with a shingle that portion of his wife presented proximate to him. "Why Senator," exclaimed the neighbor, "I'm surprised at the form of activity you are pursuing this morning!" "Son," replied the Senator, pausing in his exertions, "Ah'm relibly infohmed that the Commies have come out against wife-beating. And nothing, Suh, I repeat nothing, shall fohce me to follow the Commie line." (This story is probably not true; I made it up myself.)

Yesterday I read in the Spring, 1954, issue ex-president Valentine's ingenious "A Modest Proposal for the Care and Use of Subversives." While this plan has much to recommend it, I believe it completely undervalues the danger of indoctrinating the young with ideas. I have, I think, a much

safer plan. It is widely accepted that the Communist Party is exclusively composed of subversives; the Democrats have recently been accused of twenty years of treason; many are convinced that the Republican Party has a strong minority of cryptofascists. As far as I know, no such accusations have been made against the Prohibitionist and Vegetarian Parties. Furthermore it is clear that many, if not most, of the publicly branded revolutionaries in this country are heterosexuals. From these premises it appears that we shall achieve complete protection against the spread of the disturbing ideas so much feared if we staff our colleges and schools exclusively with homosexual members of the Prohibition and Vegetarian Parties.

I respectfully submit this idea for what it is worth.

Marston L. Hamlin Lynbrook, New York

# Swan Song

Your Winter, 1953-54, number is jolly good reading, well spiced and sweetened with wit and humor. Congratulations! That's the proper diet.

"But, oh, good Lord, the verse you [take], It gives a chap the belly-ache."

Consider the Swan song (no funereal implications): I met the lady in the first line, lost her in the second. Finally I concluded that "who" (with verbs "sits," "hears") must refer to "thee." One of the first things I ever learned about relative pronouns is that they must match the antecedent in number and person!

Moaning low, I proceeded. A pulpit "sings" (bellowing revivalist "lining out" strange so-called hymns to his victims: drab-image from boyhood). I groaned and went on.

Harmony sat down in silence and prayed; then the lady was asked to be "deep music," and the author gave her the key, which was brought in by "softer aspiration" (hard customer usually), perhaps on a bit of music manuscript.

Utterly baffled, I staggered on to the last line. I gave up. Was I to connect "begin" with the auxiliary in "I'll" or was it an imperative? Against the first militated the promise to be "mute," as well as the discourtesy of bursting into song during the "deep music" of the lady. But the second alternative seemed impossible: a beginning had long since been made with the "music."

As for "Advice to the Lost," there's one person to whom, in case I get lost, I'll never apply for directions. Heaven knows where I'd land, especially if I went "farther than you can go."

Oh, Helicon! Oh, Apollo! Oh, Mumbo Jumbo!

Asa M. Hughes Lansdale, Pennsylvania

**\*** \*

In response to Mr. Hughes's letter:

a. "Thee" followed by a third person singular verb (Thee sits, Thee hears, Is thee well?) as used by American Quakers is as ungrammatical as you find it.

b. If that singing pulpit of mine calls up to you drab boyhood images with bellowing revivalists, it is easier, but it isn't more necessary, to change the word instead of your reminiscing.

c. "I'll" connects with "begin."

d. You are right. "Mute," as being caught speechless but not absolutely music-less, is confusing.

Jon Swan Cambridge, Massachusetts

#### Moral Codes

Max Eastman in "The Cardinal Virtues" [AS: Winter, 1953-54] does an interesting job of constructing a moral code without appeal to divine sanction. I should like to suggest at least two considerations which seem not to have occurred to him.

First, he terms the teachings of Jesus a. "code" among other codes of virtue. The grouping by subject of the teachings of Jesus in our New Testament (which scholarship has shown does not correspond to his actual practice) has led to the inference that his precepts are so many rules which are to be obeyed to the letter and that his purpose was to construct a moral code. When so regarded they are often impracticable and cover only a small portion of the field of human activity. Jesus, rather, pronounced principles. Man was left free to apply them in particular cases. He emphasized the fact that he was an announcer of principles, and not a giver of laws, by pushing his precepts out beyond all possibility of literal fulfillment, as well as by speaking in parables. Jesus gave spiritual truths which followed from his conception of God, not a code to be obeyed because of divine sanction.

Second, there is a complete lack of ultimate support for "good behavior" in Mr. Eastman's system. For example, in basing the reason for mindfulness of others upon the need of such experience to "reach our own stature," we have a sadly inadequate support. If the value of the other individual rests on so narrow a base, we might decide with Hitler that the existence of certain individuals or even an entire ethnic group is not needed for us to "reach our own stature." With Jesus each person is to be respected because each person is loved of God.

J. McRee Elron Athens, Georgia

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